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97-year old Hunan woman, grandson pedal to Games



By Zhang Dongya
Xiao Xincui, 97,
is hurrying on with
her journey to the
Beijing Olympic
Games from Hunan
Province. She
arrived in
Zhengzhou, Henan
Province, Wednes-
day after a month-
long journey. Xiao
is being escorted
to the Games on
her grandson Liu
Xianghui's tricycle.
The duo began
their journey on
March 5, and the
grandson esti-
mates another half
a month before
they arrive in
town. They will
rent a house in
town to await the
Games. All told,
the journey will
cost an estimated
20,000 yuan.

CFP Photos

Can China stop smoking in time?

The test is on and four million smokers have to snuff out their habits before the Olympic deadline.
But lawmakers have ambitious plans for a broader ban in years to come.

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Damaged Lhasa shops exempt from tax after riots

By Zhang Dongya

The government is employing a tax exemption policy to encourage shops damaged in the March 14 Lhasa riots to get back to business, according to the notice issued by the government of Tibet Autonomous Region, *Xinhua* reported.

Shops damaged will be exempted from Business Tax, Income Tax, Urban Maintenance and Construction Tax and Educational Surcharges. The entire amount of Value Added Tax they have paid will be given back. Shop owners will be exempt from Individual Income Tax, and the rate for taxi drivers will be halved.

The benefit policy will be continued until February 28, 2010.

The government of Tibet Autonomous Region has promised to provide 200,000 yuan in compensation to each family of the 18 civilians killed in the riot. All the injured will receive free medical treatment.

The families of two women killed in the riot have already received the compensation, the Tibet regional government said. Other victims awaited official identification before their families could receive compensation, it said.

Measures are to be taken to help people repair their homes and shops damaged in the riot or to build new ones. Local authorities have allocated 600,000 yuan to seven schools burned down. The money will go for repairs and new equipment.

"The government will provide interest-free or government-subsidized loans to help businesses resume," Duan Xiangzheng, director of the regional administration for industry and commerce, said.

According to official statistics, 908 stores were smashed, looted or torched, and 120 homes were razed by fire. Total damage is estimated at more than 244 million yuan.

As many as 18 civilians and a police officer were killed in the riot, and more than 600 people, 382 civilians and 241 police officers, were injured.

Striking pilots could face lifetime ban

By Han Manman

The Civil Aviation Administration of China (CAAC) is investigating domestic pilots who struck after media reported 14 China Eastern Airlines' flights carrying 1,000 passengers did not land at their destinations and instead returned to their departure points.

On March 31, fourteen China Eastern Airlines (CEA) from Kunming to southwestern Yunnan Province turned around upon reaching their destinations. Zhang Jing, undersecretary of CEA media department, denied the move was an intentional strike and attributed the turnaround to weather-related landing failures. The weather did not affect flights from other airlines, which landed as scheduled.

The pilots went on strike following the release of an open letter to the airline two days ago, the *Guangzhou Daily* reported.

The letter, circulated in pilots' dormitories, expressed their "dissatisfaction over current work situations," the report said.

China's civil aviation industry has faced several such events since the beginning of March. On March 14, as many as 40 pilots for Shanghai Airlines asked for sick leave. On March 28, 11 pilots from Wuhan's East Star Airlines took sudden leave after claiming they were being "treated unfairly." Several flights were canceled at Wuhan.

The aviation authority was not immediately available to confirm the reported strike actions. However, *Guangzhou Daily* reported Wednesday that CAAC convened an emergency meeting on Tuesday, saying that the pilots involved in the March 31 strike will be punished severely and may face life-long employment bans.

The newspaper said China's

pool of pilots faces a severe shortage. Repeated conflicts were partly a result of a policy to introduce private capital funds into the aviation industry in 2004.

Pilots in state-owned companies are forced to sign 99-year contracts with employers. If they want to find a better paying job, they must pay a compensation ranging from 700,000 to 2.1 million yuan to break the contract.

The country had 10,000 pilots in 2004, which was just enough to meet the needs of more than 700 planes at that time.

In 2004, when Okay Airways, China's first private airline, was founded. The entering of the private airlines into the market makes the pool of pilots all the more strained.

In two years, the government expects to boast 1,250 domestic commercial jets, which will require a minimum of 6,500 more pilots.

Hospitals' safety net to keep out plague

By Li Fenghua

To guarantee the 2008 Olympic Games are held successfully, seven health bureaus in the city are joining hands to prevent outbreaks of contagious disease.

The health bureaus of Beijing and Tianjin, as well as Hebei, Liaoning, Jilin and Shanxi provinces and Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, will set up the network to control the development and diffusion of any such disease.

Jin Dapeng, president of Beijing Health Bureau, said the city will closely monitor cases of plague, acute gastroenteritis, infectious bird flu and SARS. A timely warning system will ensure such contagious diseases can be controlled and kept out of Beijing during the Games.

Passengers to Beijing will be required to submit to health checks. All disease control sections in Beijing are required to work closely with departments such as the railway, communication, health quarantine and airport.

According to the requirements of the Beijing Health Bureau, passengers with symptoms of fever and diarrhea must be reported to health authorities and examined immediately.

First avian flu vaccine approved



By Bai Jingnan

Panf's new live-virus vaccine for the H5N1 strain of avian influenza vaccine was approved by the China Food and Drug Administration (CFDA) Wednesday. The CFDA has issued a series of serial numbers for the vaccine's first production run. It will be initially manufactured for government storage, and is safe for recipients aged 18-60. The vaccine is administered over a series of two injections.

CFP Photo

Brief news

Increase in compensation rates

China is raising the compensation for wrongful detention to correspond to increases in the average daily income of citizens. The daily compensation was increased to 99.31 yuan, up 15.65 yuan since last year, the court's compensation committee said.

Finding oil, mineral reserves

The search is on for domestic reserves of key resources, such as iron ore and crude oil, to reduce dependence on imports, according to a government plan released Wednesday.

By 2010, China aims to find 10 new oil fields, each with a reserve of at least 100 million tons, and eight to 10 new gas fields, each with a reserve of more than 100 billion cubic meters of natural gas, the national geological surveying and prospecting plan said.

Olympics Volunteer recruitment ends

Volunteer recruitment for the Beijing Olympic and Paralympic Games closed on March 31.

As many as a million people have applied to aid in the Games. Currently, 35,000 applicants have been tested, interviewed and trained, and are preliminarily accepted.

Bracing for marriage boom

Vice Mayor Ding Xiangyang said Wednesday that Beijing will try its best to meet its citizen's demands for marriage registration on August 8, as the day is not only the opening day of the Olympic Games but also the eighth, an auspicious number linked to fortune and happiness.

Ding suggested online booking to avoid the registration jam. Two days advance registration is required for online booking.

(By Han Manman)

Penalties revealed for plastic polluters

By Annie Wei

The Ministry of Commerce has drafted a new law to punish supermarkets or shopping malls that provide plastic bags free to consumers after June 1.

The new rule requires that plastic bags be priced according to their cost; retailers cannot

provide free plastic bags to consumers by any means, even by offering promotions.

Violators may be fined up to 30,000 yuan. Retailers must supply plastics bags that meet the new national standards. Related government authorities will conduct surprise inspections to ensure

retailers comply with the law.

Retailers found to provide sub-standard bags will be warned and fined up to 30,000 yuan.

Retailers must mark the price of each plastic bag on the customer's receipt; outlets which fail to do so will be fined 5,000 yuan.

Community grocers and

morning markets must have a place to purchase bags which will record all bag purchases; markets which do not comply will be fined 20,000 yuan.

The new rule does not apply to plastic packaging distributed with freshly made foods, raw meats or noodles.

Students seek out loan sharks to keep gambling

By Zhang Dongya

Many middle school students were found gambling on ball matches in Dongguan, Guangdong Province. Some of the students turned to thievery to cover debts and find more money to gamble.

As many as 10 middle schools in Dongguan, including some famous ones like Humen Middle School and Guangming Middle School, have had a student gambling problem.

"Five or six students from each class were found gambling last year, with evidence ranging

from money to debt notes," the headmaster of Wanjiang No.2 Middle School said.

Loan sharks have found a niche with supplying money to underemployed students. "Local students can borrow less than 3,000 yuan with only their ID cards and no need for collateral. The monthly interest depends on their returning time, with 15 percent the lowest interest," one lender said.

"If it is more than 3,000 yuan, identity certification and collateral are required, and the monthly inter-

est rate will drop to 10 percent."

According to the agreement, students must pay the interest every month, otherwise they will be threatened.

Some student gamblers began to steal money, cellphones and other precious articles to pay the debts.

Xiaofeng, a senior middle school student at Humen Middle School racked up a 3,000 yuan debt. Some students have been transferred to other schools to sever their gambling connections.

Even teachers placed bets.

"[The gambling problem] is beyond the school's capability. To solve this, we need help from both society and family. Criminals outside the school are behind all the gambling," the headmaster of Changping Middle School said.

After the World Cup 2006, gambling companies set up a betting network through agents in Dongguan middle schools. This semester, betting on NBA basketball was the most popular gambling activity among students.

Public art freezes in SOHO

By He Jianwei

As many as 100 young people engaged in a public art performance, frozen simultaneously for five minutes at the square of Jianwai SOHO Tuesday noon.

A flash mob group on mosh.cn initiated this event, asking interested netizens to go to the square in front of the Starbucks at Jianwai SOHO, stand frozen for 5 minutes and then walk away.

According to their rules, frozen people could not move for 5 minutes, even to blink.

"We choose this place and this time, because we think it is convenient for the office workers to have fun during lunch and it is near their offices," Bob Guan, COO of mosh.cn, said.

At 12:25, when Guan shouted "frozen," the noisy square suddenly became quiet and the moving people turned into "sculptures" in different poses. Two women unzipped their jackets, showing their T-shirts with the words of "Leave me alone"; a man wore his coat backwards, pretending to read a book; a woman examined a 100 yuan note.

"Is that some kind performance art?" Li Qi, an office worker in Jianwai SOHO, said.

Some viewers thought it was a scene from a movie or TV series. "Maybe a director is making a film here. There are so many extra actors," Zhang Yun, an office worker, said.

After the first freeze, the organizers decided to have another five-minute freeze north of the first location.

"It is popular among office workers because it can take them away from the pressures of work and help them relax," Guan said.

Frozen public art performance is popular in the US.



Everyone freeze!

Photo by Sunny Wei

Students learn martyrs stories at Qingming Festival



Teachers and students from Nanzhongjie Minzu Primary School in Chaoyang District went yesterday morning to Majun's revolutionary cemetery for an activity to remember revolutionary martyrs and promote Olympic spirit.

Photo by Zhao Yangyang

Liuzhou officials claim finest apartments at half price

By Li Fenghua

On the east side of Liuzhou, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, stretches a complex of luxury buildings constructed as residential quarters for local government leaders.

Only high-level members of four leading groups of the local Party, municipal government, people's congress and political consultative conference are allowed to buy the 52 suites available. Each suite is more than 300 square meters, complete with garage and garden.

According to a *People's Daily's*

report, the top six suites are 340 square meters each and priced 740,000 yuan; the 320-square-meter suites at 710,000 yuan are for deputy executives.

This residential houses have many rare trees planted on the outside grounds and the location is the best in the city – the area should be among the most expensive suites in Liuzhou.

However, the average price per square of the apartments is 2,100 yuan, half of the average price of local real estate projects.

According to housing regulations in the Guangxi Region, the living quarters of government

leaders should be between 90 to 120 square meters per apartment, and the price of their housing must be consistent with market averages.

Residents in Liuzhou complained about the housing because most citizens cannot afford one house while government officials may afford several.

According to a document issued in January by CPC Central Committee for Discipline Inspection, government leaders are forbidden to construct, buy and occupy houses which do not comply with housing regulations for officials.

City to relocate 150,000 Dongcheng residents

By Li Fenghua

Due to new plans for Dongcheng development, as many as 150,000 residents will be forced to relocate to neighboring Chaoyang district, Yue Peng, vice president of Dongcheng district, said Tuesday.

"There will be radical changes in the construction of Dongcheng district. We have finished preliminary selection of some regions in Chaoyang where Dongcheng residents currently in single-story houses can move," Yue said.

Dongcheng's construction troubles stem from its dense population. Since some of the districts older residents live in *hutong* and cannot afford to buy a new house, it is difficult to preserve the city's older architecture.

The move is scheduled in accordance with the eleventh Five-Year Plan. Yue said the government hopes to provide government-subsidized housing for residents scheduled for relocation.

Wedding bells ring in city's laozihao

By Li Fenghua

Reservations for wedding banquets in *laozihao*, or time-honored restaurants, is becoming popular again. Famous dining group Judehuan said the leading Beijing duck restaurant is booked solid until next September.

Most wedding banquet slots during the May and October holidays in Xicheng district's *laozihao* are already booked, Judehuan said.

Other *laozihao* like Kaorouji, famous for roast lamb, and Kaorouwan, for roast meat, have seen a 20 percent increase in reservations this year.

A Kaorouji spokesman said it was asked to provide 130 tables during three May days; Hongbinglou was asked to provide 270 during the October holiday.

Shaguojia, famous for plain meat casserole since Qing dynasty, has 100 tables booked for a sport-themed wedding banquet during the week.

Hybrid rice inventor recognized as influential

By Bai Jingnan

The country's 11 most outstanding Chinese people were awarded at the World's Most Influential Chinese Awards, held Sunday at Beijing University's Centenary Memorial.

Yuan Longping, father of hybrid rice, received a lifetime achievement award and was the second scientist recognized after Nobel prizewinner Yang Zhenning. Yuan's success story moved the nation.

Reward recipients hail from scientific research, public affairs, sports and acting backgrounds. Basketball player Yao Ming and actress Gong Li were awarded at the ceremony.

Beijing's big ban movement

Will the no-smoking policy be easy to implement?

By Han Manman

Four million smokers in Beijing will have to kick the habit as the city tries to clean up its act before the Olympic Games. The city will ban smoking in most public places starting May.

The move was viewed as a big step against smoking. However, was it easy to implement such an act in the world's biggest tobacco market?

A smoke-free Olympics

Smoking in most public places will be banned from May 1 as part of Beijing's efforts to improve the city just ahead of the Olympics. More than 150 Chinese cities already have limited restrictions in place, but the capital will be the first to ban smoking in all restaurants, offices and schools.

Beijing has had some smoking restrictions since 1996, when the municipal government prohibited lighting up in large public venues such as schools, sports arenas and movie theaters, Zhang Peili, director of the city's legal office said.

According to Zhang, the new rules, which were announced last Saturday, expand the scope to include restaurants, bars, Internet cafes, hotels, offices, holiday resorts and all indoor areas of medical facilities.

Hotels must also have rooms reserved for non-smokers, but the ratio is still being discussed, Cui Xiaobo, a renowned tobacco control expert who helped draft the new rule, said. Bars, meanwhile, will be required to clearly separate smoking from non-smoking areas.

"Restaurants will not allow smoking from May except in some private rooms, but these rooms must have windows," Cui said. "This is only a transition period, we will eventually ban smoking in all Beijing restaurants soon."

Institutions that fail to comply face immediate fines of up to 5,000 yuan. It has not yet been decided how to deal with individual smokers breaking the new rule. Cui said that stricter regulations will be released soon.

The new smoking ban will affect at least 4 million smokers in Beijing. In China, there are approximately 350 million smokers and more than 100,000 people die each year from sec-



Zhang Yue (right) has earned notoriety for suddenly snatching cigarettes out of smokers' mouths as part of the anti-smoking campaign. CFP Photos

ond-hand smoke, according to official statistics.

Prohibition brings problems

Some restaurant owners, however, doubt the rule will be implemented effectively.

For Chinese, smoking is part of a meal, Zhao Yingqi, manager of Jingweilou Restaurant in the city's downtown, said. His restaurant has about 20 non-smoking tables compared to the 400 plus tables sporting glass or steel ashtrays.

"The rule is very hard to implement, we may lose many customers and endure a big economic loss," a restaurant owner surnamed Jin said. "We will try our best to obey the rule, but the results will be interesting."

"The problem is that there are commercial interests that make it hard," Sarah England, who heads the tobacco control department of the WHO's Beijing office said. She is talking about the state-run tobacco industry, which made 388 billion yuan last year, up 25 percent from a year earlier.

"It is obviously not going to be easy to carry out such an act," Cui said, adding that they talked with many restaurant owners before the rule was issued and said "If all the restaurants followed the new law without exception, they would not resist."

Cui said when he participated in some ban events, many citizens found it hard to accept the no smoking rule in public: even important leaders. However, prohibition is to make the public aware that "Beijing has a regulation to ban smoking now, which is a big step in China's smoking ban progress," Cui said. He admitted that the regulation can only work for the people who are very "self-conscious and abide by the law."

"The world will be watching Beijing because its success



Tobacco ads will be totally banned in China from 2011.

means a big step towards the success of the whole world, given the large smoking population of China," Cui said.

Not just an Olympic thing

Smoking bans in all hotels serving athletes and all competition venues and restaurants in the Olympic Village will be in place by June, according to organizers of the Beijing Olympics.

However, many citizens said what they care about most is how long the citywide smoking ban will last and what the actual results will be. They hope that the prohibition act will not just work during the Olympics, but come full circle after the Games.

"The prohibition action should continue even after the Olympics and more places should get involved in this clean air act," Zhang Ming, a citizen said.

The smoking ban also received large support from non-smoking groups. "There was no regulation about not smoking in hotels and offices before, so all we could do was suffer. But now it is different and we can really dissuade smokers," a non-

smoker Li Jing said.

The concept of a "smoke free" Olympics, initiated in 1988, has been in effect since the 1992 Barcelona Games.

Anti-smoking superhero

Besides the government's active promotion on the smoking ban, many NGOs and volunteers are also active to participate.

The most famous case is Zhang Yue, a man known for his vehement opposition to smoking. Zhang arrived in Yantai, Shandong province in early March and started his month-long Shandong non-smoking promotion - by snatching cigarettes away from people on Shandong streets.

After seizing a cigarette from a smoker, Zhang told the frightened man he intended to help him quit the habit. The man thanked him and said he would try smoking less.

Zhang, a native of Luoyang, Henan Province, has been to 211 cities nationwide since 2001 to oppose smoking. He says his greatest joy is to take away cigarettes from smokers.

Anti-smoking laws work

In recent years, many countries have banned smoking. The prohibited areas are expanding from public areas, like shopping centers, banks and hospitals, to all indoor areas.

New York became one of the first major world cities to ban smoking in public places with nearly a quarter of a million people kicking the habit for a significant drop in tobacco-related deaths, AFP reported last Saturday.

AFP said when New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg, himself a former smoker, put forward proposals to ban smoking in bars, restaurants and offices, critics issued dire warnings of mass opposition and labelled the ban a disaster waiting to happen.

Restaurant and club owners feared the ban would drive away business and force them to lay off thousands of workers, while smoking activists described the measures as an over-the-top reaction that stripped away their rights.

But the gloomy predictions failed to materialize. Bars and restaurants saw business increase in the first year of the ban, while a survey found 90 percent of people reporting they ate out as often or more often than before the ban.

Between 2002 and 2006, the number of smokers in the city fell by some 240,000 to around one million.

The number of smoking-related deaths dwindled by more than 11 percent from 8,722 to 7,744 during the same period.

According to AFP, London and Hong Kong have since followed suit, leaving die-hard smokers feeling more marginalized than ever before.

ATM 'thief's sentence now 5 years

Court's decision has far-reaching effects on banks, courts, public

By Han Manman

A migrant worker sentenced to life for withdrawing 175,000 yuan from a broken ATM had his sentence slashed to five years Monday after an appeal in a southern China court.

Although the spotlight has drifted from the case, the results satisfied many who claimed his previous life sentence was too severe and prompted mass fears of ATM malfunction.



Facing the five-year term of imprisonment, Xu Ting, 24, said he would not appeal further. CFP Photos

Imprisonment cut

The Intermediate People's Court of Guangzhou in southern Guangdong Province convicted Xu Ting of theft and fined him 20,000 yuan, in addition to his five-year jail term. It also demanded that Xu return the money to the bank.

"The judges reached their verdict taking into account the fact that Xu's theft took place when there was something wrong with the ATM. Compared to a premeditated crime, he did not have a malicious intention," Gan Zhengpei, a judge, said.

"Xu took advantage of the faulty ATM and stole the money using his bank card. His case is hardly grave compared to violent robbery," the judge said.

The man's father remains unhappy with the decision and plans to lodge an appeal.

However, Xu Ting, 24, said he would not appeal further.

ATM phobia

Xu's case has prompted many to fear ATM malfunction. Many people expressed worry that a machine may dispense too much money and land them in trouble as well.

Many say the chance of a machine malfunctioning may be reduced, but can never be eliminated. An ATM can "easily lure in customers when the system is broken," Zhang Xin, an office worker said.

In a previous Internet survey which asked "If you ended up in the same situation as Xu Ting, would you withdraw more money from the machine?" Nearly 50 percent of respondents said they would have done the same. Only 7 percent of the 19,437 respondents said they would stop withdrawing money and report the error to the bank.

Many people fear becoming the next Xu Ting.

The same day as Xu Ting's judgment, a couple in Zhengzhou went to the local bank to withdraw 20,000 yuan, but were handed 40,000 yuan by the bank's teller. The teller said she made a mistake because she was ill and it affected her work. Faced with the "huge amount of money," the couple was in a quandary. Thinking of Xu's case, they immediately decided to return to the bank and report the error.

Last week, a 27-year-old man visited an ATM in Foshan city, Guangdong Province. Even before he inserted his card, the machine began to spit out money. Terrified of being arrested, he immediately called the police.

Fallout

Xu's case remains of interest. Although the five-year prison sentence has satisfied many when compared with the previous life sentence, citizens and experts say the root of the case remains unsolved.

The courts: Although Xu's sentence was commuted to 5 years, the court still has not appeased the public at large. The judge said in the first trial said Xu was guilty of theft of a very large sum - an opinion upheld by Monday's court. However, many believe Xu's case was influenced by media and social pressure. "The court should judge the crime according to the law. Changing the sentence to reflect public pressure diminishes the court's prestige," Ma



Xu's case has prompted many to fear ATM malfunctions.

Li, a citizen commentator, said.

The banks: Some critics say the new judgment is still to protect the bank. Critics say Xu's bank is partly to blame for not maintaining its ATM, and not that the bank ever suffered a loss since the ATM manufacturer refunded its lost 175,000 yuan.

"Xu's case is analogous to someone finding money on the street and not turning it in," Wu Yichun, Xu's lawyer, said. "This should be a civil case, not a criminal one."

Others slam China's banks for cheating their customers without penalty, even as Xu is sentenced to life. Internet postings criticize financial institutions that refuse to reimburse customers after their ATMs spit out counterfeit bills or blank "test" paper. In one case cited online, a Mr Chen from Beijing discovered the 100 yuan note from the ATM he was using was fake. The bank refused to exchange it, saying there was no evidence it came from the bank's machine.

Special case: According to the court, Xu Ting's case is unique, and there was no legal precedent to rely on. "The case was hotly debated for four months in China. I am so disappointed that the case never achieved any legal breakthroughs," Dou Hanzhang, a critic, said.

The public also doubts how the courts handled a similar case that happened in Yunnan seven years ago. A man named He Peng was sentenced to life for a crime similar to Xu's. To commute Xu's sentence but not He's is unfair.

Background

Xu, a native of Linfen City in the Shanxi Province, once stood guard at the entrance to the Guangdong Provincial Higher People's Court.

In April 2006, he found a "magic" ATM nearby. The machine only deducted one yuan from his account each time he withdrew 1,000 yuan.

Xu, withdrew 175,000 yuan over 171 transactions, then spent a year on the run before being caught and sentenced to life in prison last November.

Xu shared the secret with a friend, surnamed Gao, who confessed to police after taking 18,000 yuan from the faulty ATM. Gao was jailed for one year.

Under China's criminal law, thefts of more than 100,000 yuan from financial organizations carry a life sentence.

Kazakhstan President first torch bearer in relay

The president of Kazakhstan ran with the Olympic flame Wednesday in a tightly-guarded ceremony that he praised as a display of his country's close relationship with China.

Kazakhstan was the first stop for the Olympic flame on its 130-day global tour. About 4,500 policemen were deployed to guard the ceremony in Almaty, the economic capital of the oil-rich nation, a former Soviet republic, which has become increasingly dependent on its economic and political ties with neighboring China.

"The fact that the city of Almaty became the first point of the Olympic flame's run proves China's good attitude toward Kazakhstan, and Chairman Hu Jintao's good attitude toward me personally," President Nursultan Nazarbayev, dressed in a white sports outfit, said before his short symbolic torch run at a mountain resort.

"We are grateful for such good feelings toward Kazakhstan," the 67-year old leader said.

A crowd greeted the chartered plane that brought the torch from Beijing. About 80 runners participated, including Kazakh athletes and government officials.

The cheering crowd mostly consisted of university students.

The Beijing Olympic flame arrived by plane in Kazakhstan Tuesday for the first leg of an international torch relay in the run-up to the Beijing Summer Games Tuesday.

Almaty has spent 400 million tenge (US \$3.3 million) and deployed 4,500 police officers to guard over the Olympic flame's passage through the city, mayor Iman-gali Tacmagambetov told Interfax.

President Hu Jintao launched the global torch relay in Beijing's Tian'anmen Square Monday,



The international torch relay heads first for Kazakhstan. The Kazakhstan President Nursultan Nazarbayev is the first torch bearer. CFP Photo

shortly after the Olympic flame arrived from Greece. Hu lit the Olympic flame in a large cauldron in the square before handing his torch to Liu Xiang, the 110-meter hurdles world champion and world record holder, to begin the relay.

After Almaty, the flame was scheduled to be flown to Istanbul, St Petersburg, London, Paris, San Francisco, Buenos Aires, Dar es Salaam, Muscat, Islamabad, Mumbai, Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur, Jakarta, Canberra, Nagano, Seoul,

Pyongyang, Ho Chi Minh City, Taipei, Hong Kong and Macao.

After the intercontinental events, the torch relay is to visit dozens of China's mainland cities and province.

(Agencies)

China's new women's soccer coach vows to clean up mess

(AFP) — The new national women's football coach has vowed to clean up the "mess" left after Frenchwoman Elizabeth Loisel was sacked five months ahead of the Beijing Olympics, the China Daily reported Tuesday.

"I know lots of people are talking about the awful mess and having doubts about the future," it quoted Shang Ruihua as saying.

"I cannot allow the team to stay in this mess anymore as we have no time left before the Beijing Games."

Shang, 63, said his first major task was to bring unity back to the side that has failed to perform up to expectations in recent years and has been tasked to reach at least the semi-finals of the August Games.

"I am not a picky coach and I will not complain about the mess," Shang said.

"I am willing to accept the challenge and help our women's

team out of the deep end."

Shang coached the national side to fifth place at the inaugural women's World Cup in China in 1991.

He is China's fifth women's football coach since the Athens Olympics less than four years ago.

Loisel, 44, was fired late last month less than five months after the association appointed her head coach with a mission of bringing the team back to the world elite-level, according to media reports.

Loisel endured a fractious relationship with Chinese officials during her tenure and was under regular attack by the media. Problems came to a head after China finished ninth in the recent Algarve Cup in Portugal.

According to the *China Daily*, the team once known as the "steel roses," has dropped to 14th place world ranking, the lowest ever, and below Asian rivals North Korea, ranked world number six, and



Shang Ruihua started training the women soccer's team last weekend. Photo by cola

Japan, at number 10.

Loisel took over for Swedish coach Marika Domanski-Lyfors, who abruptly quit after a poor run in the women's World Cup last year. She also reportedly became embroiled in disputes

with association bureaucrats.

China's women's football team has been in a downward spiral over the past 10 years since winning the silver medal at the 1996 Olympics and placing second in the 1999 World Cup.

China passes up France in art sales



The Chinese modern art market is gradually overtaking the French market. Photo by Fan Zi

(FT) — The French love of fine art appears to be in question after a survey showed that China has overtaken France as a market for art sales.

An explosion of interest in contemporary Chinese art has helped China unseat France from its traditional number three spot for the first time, according to the Art Market Trends report, published yesterday by the French-based art market information group Artprice.

And although China remains a distant third with more than 7 percent of global auction revenues, against 43 percent for New York and 30 percent for London, it may not be long before the Asian powerhouse begins to challenge these once untouchable capitals, the report suggests.

Part of France's problem could be the dearth of new young talent. While artists born after 1945 account for almost 10 percent of global sales, they represent less than 3 percent of the market in France, the report states.

"It is simply emblematic of the French decline," one art critic who preferred not to be named said. "There hasn't been a brilliant French artist since the second world war."

China, meanwhile, claims 15 of the 35 artists worldwide who command seven-digit sales, and the country's artists have seen prices rise eight-fold in the past seven years.

The decline of France's artistic reputation has already raised alarm bells in a government attempting to reform everything from the labor market to public broadcasting. Christine Albanel, culture minister, will unveil this week a plan to revitalize the country's art market.

Francois Curiel, chairman of Christie's France, rejected the suggestion that the French art market was fading, saying that the problem was an onerous tax system that penalized French art sales, and contemporary artists in particular. "We simply are not fighting with the same weapons as our US or European colleagues," he said.

It is not all bad news for the auction houses of Paris, which benefited from a buoyant global market in 2007. Global prices rose more than 18 percent, and the French market performed even better, with prices running 30 percent higher.

But Artprice warns that the conditions of 2007 are unlikely to continue into 2008. The subprime crisis will take its toll on Wall Street bonuses that fueled what now looks like a speculative bubble almost unprecedented in the art market, the report warns.

But "these exceptional price levels are starting to look like ceiling prices, particularly now that the economic climate is clouding over."

Technophiles test new 3G phones in eight cities



First 3G phone customer, surnamed Wu, in a China Mobile outlet in Beijing.

Photo by Sunny Wei

By Annie Wei

Commercial trials began for new third-generation (3G) mobile phone services Tuesday, drawing immediate support from high-tech addicts.

Long lines formed outside the outlets of 3G retailers starting at 7 am. In some Beijing stores, customers complained the 3G system was slow to log in.

Many consumers thought 3G was more expensive, but the special deals China Mobile provided

for trial subscribers made the costs easier to bear.

Buyers said they were happy with the fast speeds, but had to carry two cell phones since most friends and family had not switched to a 3G network.

The trial high-speed wireless connection service is based on a Chinese wireless standard called TD-SCDMA, short for Time Division Synchronous Code Division Multiple Access. According to China Mobile

operators, the network is available in eight major cities, including Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou.

The service features high-speed data transmissions that will enable users to watch videos, play 3D games and conduct video conferences.

The trial pool includes 20,000 users armed with handsets valued 2,000-4,000 yuan each and free data cards charge.

Six handset producers have

produced trial phones: Lenovo, Hisense, ZTE and New Postcom from China and Samsung and LG from South Korea.

China Mobile said the trial service would have no impact on the issuing of 3G licenses. Information on how long the trial will last and when it will be extended to other cities has not been revealed.

The trial results will be important for the future of 3G service, communications authorities said.

U of York seeks partnership in China

By Gan Tian

The University of York held its first overseas graduation ceremony in Beijing last Saturday at the Kerry Center.

More than 100 Chinese postgraduates who pursued academic study in the University of York were granted degrees by Greg Dyke, chancellor of York. Two Chinese scientists, Bai Chunli and Pan Yunhe, were given an honorary doctorate due to their work for developing co-operation between York and Zhejiang and Nanjing universities.

Brian Cantor, vice-Chancellor of the university, said about 20 percent of York's staff is from outside the UK, with Chinese students accounting for 3-5 percent.

Nestlé expands icecream line in Guangzhou

By Annie Wei

The Nestlé Group with 20 factories in 17 different sites in China launched a new ice cream factory in Guangzhou last month. Nestlé had sales of 13 billion yuan in the Greater China Region last year. The new facility with a 250 million yuan investment will be Nestlé's largest ice cream factory in Asia. It replaces the Company's previous manufacturing facility in Guangzhou. This factory provides three times the production capacity of the old plant.

Dongxiang to expand brand ownership

(FT) — China Dongxiang, which owns the rights to Italian sportswear brand Kappa in China and Macao, on Tuesday said it intends to acquire Japanese ski-wear company Phenix, which holds the rights to Kappa in Japan. China Dongxiang raised US \$704million in an initial public offering in Hong Kong last year and holds 5.3 billion yuan in cash.

There are now nearly 2,000 Kappa outlets in China. The company aims to open up to 1,800 stores in three years, and to raise its market share in China from 6 percent currently to 10 percent by 2010.

Philips teams up with China hospital

(FT) — Philips is expected to sign a medical research partnership agreement on Wednesday with one of China's biggest hospitals, a first for multinational companies in the country. The Dutch group, which is the world number three in medical imaging equipment, is set to form a partnership with the West China Hospital in Sichuan province, which, with 4,300 beds and 2 million outpatients, is the largest single-building hospital in China and one of the largest in the world. (By Li Fenghua)

10 video Web sites get new licenses

By Annie Wei

The State Administration of Radio, Film and Television (SARFT) will grant licenses to 10 video Web sites this month, China Business News reported this week.

Three of the 10 possible license-gainers are privately-operated, and the rest have received state-investment, the article said.

Since early this year, SARFT's tightening of control over video sites has drawn public and investor attention.

The country is home to 300 video Web sites, which have attracted as much as US \$200 million in venture capital.

Popular Web sites Tudou, Youku and Wole were not among the 10 listed by SARFT, according to the article.

SARFT sources said sites to be licensed are primarily video-on-demand operations and do not allow video sharing. It said Web sites like Tudou continue to have unsolved content

control problems.

The administration published the results of its inspections last month. It fined 32 video sites, including Tudou, and demanded 25 cease operations.

Executives from Joy.com, one of the licensed sites, said the issuing of licenses is a flag for investors to know the industry will be more tightly regulated.

Sources from Joy said the company is preparing to go public.

According to regulations for online music and video Web sites issued by SARFT in January, only state-owned companies or those where the state has a share could apply for content sharing.

It also said existing video Web sites could keep operating, but new market players will require licenses to enter the market.

Online video giants YouTube and Baidu must cooperate with a state-owned enterprise or purchase a license from an existing video site if it wishes to engage in online video sharing business within China, Li said.

Renault recall on Megane misses China

By Zhang Dongya

Renault Megane vehicles may have hidden safety problems of which car purchasers are unaware, according to a notice issued by Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine (AQSIQ) Monday.

According to the information published by other countries, Renault began a recall on the Megane II and Clio III due to transmission problems in 2006 in Europe. There are many imported Meganas in the domestic market, but AQSIQ has not received any information about the problem from Renault.

In order to guarantee the safety of consumers, AQSIQ published a caution list on Renault Megane, with its HS coding 87032230-87032339.

It also urged Renault to esti-

mate the risk of the transmission trouble of the Renault Megane in domestic markets as soon as possible, to take effective measures to ensure the consumers' safety and to offer solutions for the problems of imported cars on paper for AQSIQ.

People who own a Renault Megane can have their cars tested for free at a service center or the 4S shop, according to the notice Renault published in China this February. The valves will be changed for free if problems are detected.

Consumers should have their cars repaired if they see the transmission warning light turn on or incorrect display of speed in the speedometer.

The Renault Megane was imported in 2005. With annual sales of about 1,000 cars, there are 5,000 Meganas in the domestic market.

Correction

The author of the comics work, which was published on the cover of *Beijing Today* on January 18, 2008, is Aris Baraboutis. The curator of Labyrinths-Comics and Contemporary Exhibition is Kat-erina Barampouti.

Public memorial ceremonies damage China's pocketbook



Memorial ceremonies for ancestors are held more often. Last year, a group of university students from the US took part in a ceremony to memorialize Confucius (Kongzi).



Photos by Zhou Xuefeng/Shan Lang

By Li Fenghua

In recent years, public memorial ceremonies have been very popular in China. Today, for Qingming Festival, a new round of public memorial ceremonies have started.

With limited number of ancestors, there have been a lot of arguments amongst the local governments. Huangling, Shannxi Province and Xinzheng, Henan Province competed for the orig-

inal birth place of Huangdi, the forefather of the Chinese. The Laozi ceremony was just held in Luyi, Henan. Another Laozi Culture Park was built in Linzhao, Gansu and a Laozi Culture Ceremony was held simultaneously.

Ceremonies for several ancestors from Chinese history were held frequently in different places, under all kinds of names, such as a birth ceremony, death ceremony or travel ceremony.

According to statistics, it cost 0.28 billion yuan to renovate the Huangdi's tomb in Shannxi Province. About 0.2 billion yuan were spent on building all kinds of ceremonial structures in Shaoxing, Zhengjiang Province. Last year, the well-known poor county, Zhushan in Hubei Province, spent 15 million Yuan to build an 18-meter-high statue of Nuwa.

In most of these public memorial ceremonies, local govern-

ments declare that it is a way of introducing funds. In 2006, Xinzheng, a ceremony named, "Travel to Huangdi's Hometown" was held in Xinzheng, Henan Province, with a 50 percent increase in travel income from previous years.

But most of the netizens frown on such government investment, regarding it as a waste of the public treasure and damaging the traditional culture of China.

Comments

A waste of money

Most of the ceremonies are not good, economically speaking, since they are mostly held far from the cities. No one really wants to invest in them. Without proper statistics, such ceremonies are just a waste of money with a mountain of imitation ancient relics.

— Ge Jianxiong, professor at Fudan University

Strict regulations needed

Public memorial ceremonies should be regulated. Such activity should be handled by the mass organizations. The government should not get involved in such activities and the funds should be collected by personal donations, not from the national treasury. The government officials should take part in such ceremonies under

their own names. The financial investment of public ceremonies should be transparent with strict audits.

— Zhao Yuan, research fellow from the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences

Weakening the culture

There have been far too many of these public memorial ceremonies which have watered down the traditional

culture instead of protecting and strengthening it.

— Chen Donghui, associate professor at Zhengjiang University

Government toots own horn

The public ceremony is just the government showing off its achievements; in other words, a phony cultural image engineered by the government.

— Qin Kun, a netizen

Director's dig goes down badly

By Li Fenghua

The snowstorm disaster at the beginning of this year affected thousands of people in 10 provinces in China. Liu Jigui, a peasant from Hunan Province, helped 44 passengers who were stranded on a bus on the Jingzhu Expressway with his own savings.

His behavior was praised. But recently, a dispute involving the 44 bus victims' attitudes towards him

was raised by a CCTV talk show.

The program, Duihua (Dialogue), had planned a program with Liu as their guest. It wanted to surprise Liu by inviting some of the bus passengers on to the program. Haiyang, the program director, contacted 20 of the passengers, but all of them refused.

Last Thursday, three days before the broadcast, Haiyang put his written notes on a Web site,

accusing these passengers of being ungrateful to their benefactor, Liu.

The post triggered hot debate on the web. About 5,000 netizens responded. Most of them offered a more understanding comment after watching the program on Hunan Satellite TV where all of the passengers attended and toasted Liu.

Addressing the Web comments, CCTV Director Haiyang said that

the report was just his own personal view and did not represent CCTV in any way. "I know that these passengers appeared on the Hunan Satellite TV show. But I contacted 20 of them and proposed reimbursement for their travel and accommodation and all of them refused. I am not slighting them for not accepting our invitation, just questioning their gratitude to their benefactor." Haiyang said.

Comments

Passengers did the right thing

These passengers were not ungrateful to Liu. After the exposure of the Jingzhu expressway incident, all of the passengers agreed to pay a New Year's call to Liu Jigui. On the live TV show on Hunan Satellite TV, these passengers toasted to Liu, which was very moving.

These passengers have no hard feelings toward CCTV. The fact that they didn't attend the CCTV program does not necessarily mean that they are ungrateful to Liu Jigui.

— eaglelsb

It's the Chinese way

The Chinese are very introverted by nature. They do not outwardly show their gratitude

immediately but they keep rewarding someone's kindness from within their hearts. There may have been a lot of reasons for their absence from the CCTV program but I believe they appreciate what is done for them deep in their hearts.

— Chen Lisi, president of political education department at China Youth

College for Political Sciences CCTV not the judge and jury

It is not reasonable for CCTV to ask them to come to Beijing to take part in such TV programs since they have to put aside their job responsibilities. Would their bosses allow them to do this? CCTV shouldn't be so judgemental.

— fix2abc



CCTV is not spoof proof

By Zhang Dongya

The 2008 Intel Developer Forum (IDF) was held at the Shanghai International Convention Center Wednesday. A Macromedia Flash video from the Intel Company included in the IDF email was thought to be a spoof by the news department at CCTV.

Anchors Yuanyuan and Xinxin broadcast the news in the style of a typical CCTV news program. It began with a comic sketch and mixed in Chinese traditional talk shows like Shandong's kuaiban and pingshu. At the end, it mimicked the credit list of crew members shown in a typical CCTV news broadcast.

The video tried to show the development of Intel in China over 40 years. A questionnaire was included in the email to determine the effect of the clip used in the video by asking whether it was interesting and creative to publicize the enterprise's image.

Most people in the IT field agreed that it was a successful way to market locally. With the addition of local elements and humor it gelled with young people's attitudes and it was also thought to successfully convey a sense of humanism in its brand.

Comments

Intel intuition

Big Multinational Corporations (MNC) always have problems demonstrating localization. Google in China is not successful in localization when competing with Baidu. Intel has been in China for some time now and their sales success is directly related to their localization. The special marketing strategies Intel carried out can be looked upon as a public measure and the wisdom of an enterprise.

— Li Anke, chief editor of Woku.com

Adult attitude

The Intel video shows marketing in an entertaining way, and more than just a spoof of a CCTV news show. Multinational corporations have emphasized localization in China very much and they intend to convey trust to the Chinese market through their actions. Obviously, it shows the mature side of MNC in China.

— Cai Wei, critic of Xinmin.cn

Oversensitive

I don't think it had anything to do with spoofing CCTV since news shows are produced the same way all over the world. Besides spoofs are so common in flash-style videos now that nothing is strange.

— Terry Li, TV reporter

An Irish drama examines family values through Oedipus

By He Jianwei

"As in the Chinese culture, the concept of family is the core of the Irish culture," Gavin Quinn, artistic director of Ireland's Panpan Theater said.

From April 3 to 6, the Panpan Theater presents its new drama *Oedipus Loves You* at the Oriental Pioneer Theater. China is the 12th country on the list of their tour since the play debuted in Dublin, Ireland in October 2006.

Oedipus Loves You is a performance looking at the historical curiosity of the Oedipus myth and its relevance for the anxious modern age, and the reflection of people's fears if placed into the Oedipus' situation. "It is an exploration of the violation of taboos in our society, which we observe almost every day but are unsure of how to react to at the moment of truth," Quinn said.

Quinn believes that the Oedipus myth is part of their popular culture as well as their European heritage and is still deeply connected to contemporary living and modern day art practices. "It is like a bible left in a hotel room drawer which changes meaning and context depending on whoever picks it up. In this project,



21st century's denotation about the classic Oedipus.

Photo provided by the Oriental Pioneer Theater

we intended to search for the most appropriate format and language to release its powerful energy to contemporary audiences," he said.

His play is more about the relationships amongst family members. "Family is important in China. They eat together and have big family gatherings. It is the same in Ireland where the family unit sticks

together even if one member does wrong," he said.

Quinn has seven family members. "Wherever you go, you can't escape the family. You can divorce your wife, but you can't divorce your family," he said.

The performance will contain live music played by the actors and will have a real blood and guts

atmosphere as well as a use of aesthetics more associated with the visual arts.

The setting or environment will be a kind of contemporary, imaginary suburbia inhabited by characters named, Oedipus, Antigone, Creon, Terisias and Jocasta who act out the story of a complicated family history.

Greece spotlights Aegean culture

By Han Manman

To accompany the Beijing Olympic Games, a Greek archaeological exhibition named "Cyclades: Masterpieces of an Aegean Culture" started at the Beijing Art Museum, Imperial City yesterday.

The exhibition, with works from the Museum of Cycladic Art and the National Archaeological Museum in Athens, will continue until May 15.

Thirty-six artifacts including marble figurines, marble and ceramic pots, and bronze and stone tools, dating from the late 4th and 3rd millennia BC will travel to Beijing for the first time.

The exhibition could bring the visitor into contact with a number of typical examples of one of the earliest European cultures, which had profoundly human characteristics. The Cycladic culture evolved and flourished, mainly in the third millennium BC, in the Cyclades Islands at the centre of the Aegean.

A day before the exhibition, a visual exhibition was held at the Beijing Hellenic House. The one month exhibition will be open to the public Wednesdays to Sundays.

The Foundation of the Hellenic World installed a virtual reality production at the Hellenic House in the form of a virtual cinema which gives visitors the opportunity to take a virtual tour to Ancient Olympia and the workshop of the sculptor Phidias. On the same system, they can also view a film from the exhibition titled, "Tales of the Olympic Games."

According to the Greek embassy, the "visual cinema" is a large bright screen which is large enough for approximately 20 people to watch. With the use of stereoscopic glasses, visitors have the feeling that they are immersed into the environment created by the 3D digital graphics. And with the use of an interactive hand device, one of the visitors has the opportunity to guide the tour and to participate actively in the exploration, and sometimes even the modification of the virtual environment.

Mexican magnate shares his work and words

By Jackie Zhang

Juan Antonio Pérez Simón, Mexican business magnate and famous collector in America, is sharing 100 of his 19th century painting collections now in the exhibition "From the Academia to Impressionism" at the Beijing World Art Museum. Last week, he came to Beijing for two reasons, to launch the exhibition, and to tell people how he became the present "he."

Simón created his foundation in the early 1990s. It is a non-profit charity organization. Due to his interests in European art and collection, and his financial background, the foundation now is a big private artistic work collection organization.

"The passion for art is the source of my life and what shocks me and makes me ponder," Simón said. "During my first visit to Europe, the collector bug germinated in my body. I stood in front of the works of the brilliant painters, appreciating their brushwork, and I felt really happy. The passion made me realize that art was the utopia in our life. I still believe that to this day."

He visited Europe but unlike ordinary tourists. He went to Arles in France where Van Gogh lived and painted. "I found that the explanation to arts can unveil pain and produce happiness."

Comparing the two, Simón likes sculptures more than paint-

ings. It is different to see them in books than actually living with them. He said that sculptors did not rely on colors. "They gave their works passion and life. In resting materials, beauty is vivid."

Simón's collection ranges from the 19th to the 20th century. "In my collection, the themes that appear most are the ones detailing my life as well as women, happiness, nature and work. Collections are like a portrait of the collector, showing his passion, fancy and closest love."

As a famous collector, Simón thought he was a good friend to artists. He helped them to express their thoughts and feeling by collecting their works. He thought that every

collector should realize his social responsibility and be aware of society's expectation of him. "Collectors should be willing to learn and research and need to communicate with artistic works. The most important point is that they should share their collections with others."

Another important thing Simón mentioned was that, collectors should choose artistic works in a market cautiously taking into account the collectors' cultural background, his opinion and tastes in addition to the quality of the works. "Then, it is necessary to listen to experts' suggestions. It's also critical to get a document proving the work's authenticity."

7

Debate



Rewards for relinquishing seats



Background

Eastern and western viewpoints meet here



洋腔论见

文化差异的碰撞与融合



Transformer substation breeds controversy

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7

Debate

BEIJING TODAY

5-a-side football league to recruit for new season

By Jackie Zhang

This year's spring 5-a-side football league organized by Club-Football starts April 19. The event draws hundreds of people from different countries living and working in Beijing every year.

The previous tournament of the Spring 2008 MasterCard Club-Football 5-a-side League was held last October and November. There were 56 teams in the mid-week competition and eight teams in the weekend tournament.

This spring, the mid-week tournament has expanded to include 64 teams, with the eight divisions now split into the Chaoyang North and the Chaoyang South Leagues. The upcoming weekend tournament which begins on April 19 will be expanded to include 24 teams. It is an almost 38 percent increase in the number of teams participating in the league from last autumn. The spring midweek competition will begin next month.

The weekend tournament will last until mid-June. Every team will have two 30-minute matches a day. The top two teams in each division will enter the next stage of competition and the last two teams will be eliminated.

Last autumn, the team FY Khalil, which included Englishmen, Kiwis, Welsh, Scottish, Americans, Germans and Panamanians, won the midweek tournament. FY Khalil was the Division 1 champion. The team, with 6 other teams who also won their



5-a-side football league action from last autumn

Photo by City Weekend

divisions, and the second place teams all won promotion to the previously-mentioned division for the Spring tournament. The Iran team who won last autumn's weekend competition will move on to the newly-expanded weekend tournament as well.

As some teams originate from football clubs, everyone does different jobs and comes from different places. Some teams are created by embassies, some are groups are university students, some are old friends and some

are company teams.

"I prefer 5-a-side because it's fast paced and high scoring and I like the blend of serious and friendly competition. The people I've met through soccer have helped me settle into Beijing," Glen Royce, a man from the US and who played on the team Summer Palace said.

The company staff also felt that the league helped them relax. Dutchman Frits Faber from the team ConocoPhillips said that playing on the team broke a lot

of ice for him. "In large corporations people tend to stick to their own departments but with the team I got to know people and it built team spirit."

As hundreds of people from all walks of life and from every nation take part in the 5-a-side league every year, the competition is like the FIFA World Cup every week in Beijing.

If you, or your team, are interested in the tournament, you can call 5130 6893/4/5/6 ext 8003 for registration.

The oddest couple is in town

By Gan Tian

Famous US playwright Neil Simon's *The Odd Couple* will hit the boards tonight at Block 8 near the west gate of Chaoyang Park.

Chris Verrill, the president of the Beijing Playhouse, has been considering bringing this Broadway comedy classic to China for a long time. "This is the winner of four Tony Awards. Every work of Neil Simon is excellent, and this is his best," he said.

Rod Archer, the comedy's US director, has a lot of experience. He became fascinated with theater since he played Tiny Tim in a 1956 show when he was only six years old.

Archer concentrated on the actors' and actresses' ability in both Chinese and Western theater skills. In his dictionary, fast spoken words are the main trait of Western theater, while exaggerated movements belong to Chinese theater. "I combined them all in the play," he said.

The director mentioned it is okay if the audience does not understand English. There will be Chinese subtitles when the play runs. Archer used Western theater's exaggerated facial expressions and body gestures to make the comedy



Scene from the "The Odd Couple"

Photo by Chris Verrill

easy to understand. The cast has been doing rehearsals in the hall of the Beijing British School every night for more than two months.

"One interesting thing was that some of the cleaning staff stopped by and watched us rehearsing. They didn't understand English but they laughed when they watched us," Archer recalled.

The cast all earned their roles through open auditions. Potential cast members came from varied ethnical backgrounds including German, Chinese, British and American. Half of the cast were experienced actors and

actresses, but the other half seemed green. "They learned fast," Archer said.

The Odd Couple's one-liners have been zinging Broadway stages for 40 years. "You will see all the roles are real people in your life," the director said, which may explain why the comedy attracts people. "Two mis-matched people forced to live together? That concept is as hilarious as it is universal," Verrill said.

Audiences can still book tickets by calling 137 1890 8922. Tickets are going at 250 yuan each. The show will last till the end of this month.

First expat fair kicks off

By Annie Wei

To provide the expanding expat community with more information to make their stay in Beijing easier, the World Events Agency (WEA) is holding a special fair called Expat Show Beijing this weekend.

Last year, the agency had great success staging the first Expat Show Shanghai, which attracted more than 200 exhibitors and 10,000 visitors.

The three-day event will gather service providers of all kinds in Beijing and provide different activities to help visitors get a better handle on the Chinese perspective.

The 2008 Expat Show is the first edition of an annual event geared towards establishing the only face-to-face contact between companies and customers in town.

Where: China World Trade Center 1 Jian Guo Men Wai Avenue
When: April 4 afternoon to 6
Cost: free for all visitors
Tel: 6505 2288



Expat kids lined up at the Shanghai fair Photo provided by WEA

Event

Booktalk: Imperial Masquerade – the Legend of Princess Der Ling

Daughter of a Manchu aristocrat, confidante of Empress Dowager Cixi, a woman who donned chic Western fashions in China and her ceremonial court robes in the US and eventually became the wife of an American soldier of fortune, Princess Der Ling was a fascinating human study of conflicting identities.

Imperial Masquerade is the first biography of Princess Der Ling – an endlessly intriguing character caught between cultures during a period of great change in China. Grant Hayter-Menzies reads from his brand new book.

Where: The Bookworm, Building 4, Nan Sanlitun Lu, Chaoyang District

When: April 8, 7:30pm

Tel: 6586 9507

Peking Opera Workshop

The Chinese Culture Club will invite professional actors from the Peking Opera to introduce you to the history, complexity and subtleties of this famous Chinese art form.

Attendees will be informed about the training and performing institutions that support the Peking Opera and introduced to the actors who will demonstrate the preparation for a performance rituals, in particular the meticulous process of preparing the facial makeup.

Where: Chinese Culture Club, Kent Center, No 29 Anjialou, Liangmaqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: April 11, 8-10 pm

Cost: 100 yuan

Tel: 6432 9341

DJ Tito at LAN Club

DJ Tito will perform at the LAN Club. Raised under the influence of his dad's disco-funk soul collection, DJ Tito started his career in 1996 when he was asked to spin his funky tunes in a brand new DJ cafe. DJ Tito has been part of organizations such as Prohibition at Redlight and Intimacy, a rotating party, held in unusual venues throughout Paris including the chic Maxim's, owned by designer Pierre Cardin.

Where: LAN Club, 4/F Twin Tower, B12 Jianguomen Wai Dajie, Dongcheng District

When: April 5, 9:30 pm

Tel: 5109 6012

Ballroom dance party

The Beijing Ballroom Dance Club will organize a dance party and play the best mix of dance music in the city: Waltz, Foxtrot, Swing, Salsa, Rumba, Cha Cha, Bachata, Samba, Argentine Tango, Disco-Hustle and much more.

Where: Sino-Chu Wine Bar & Restaurant, 18 Liangmahe Nanlu, Chaoyang District

When: April 5, 8-11:30 pm

Cost: free

Tel: 8532 2418

(By He Jianwei)

Sino-French art sprouts in spring

By Han Manman

For the third year Festival Croisements will open April 3 with the staging of famous French opera *Le Roi d'Ys*.

Starting April 3, the two-month-long festival croisements 2008 will present more than 100 shows and exhibitions featuring French artists collaborating with Chinese counterparts from 18 towns and cities in China.

Under the direction of the France Culture Centre and Embassy of France in China, the Festival Croisements 2008 includes music, dance, theatre, circus performances and visual arts.

The following are highlights of some events in Beijing.

Le Roi d'Ys

One of the most beautiful romantic French music works, *Le Roi d'Ys* is taken from a Breton legend, when the town of Ys was engulfed by floods in the fifth century.

Where: Beijing National Grand Theatre

When: April 3 to 6

A sigh of love – In the Mood for Love

Inspired by the same story that Wong Kar Wai used for his film *In the Mood for Love*, this ballet links classical and modern dance in this particular production which represents the strong creativity of

the Shanghai Ballet Company.

Where: Tianqiao Theatre

When: April 19 to 21

Rameau's Bossa Fataka

Hip-Hop and African contemporary dance, closing act of the Croisements festival

Where: National Grand Theatre

When: June 11

Arlequin Explores China

Actors, narrators, musicians and acrobats invite us to travel with them from Venice to Beijing, moving from commedia dell'arte to traditional Beijing Opera allowing us to savour and enjoy a love story filled with vengeance, passion and jealousy.

A bilingual play in Chinese and French

Where: Nine Theater

When: May 25 to 27

Forty years of photography

World-renowned photographer, Marc Riboud reveals here a look at Chinese history from the Mao era to the present day. His photos offer a realistic view of China which is impregnated with beauty.

Where: Paris-Beijing Photo Gallery

When: April 26 to June 14

In addition, the French film festival will be held from April 10 to 21 in the local cinemas. For more information about Festival Croisements 2008, visit festival-croisements.cn.



A scene from *Le Roi d'Ys*

Photo provided by French Embassy

Italian Jazz jump starts Beijing Jazz series

By Zhang Dongya

The Italy Jazz Weekend Opening Concert will be held at The Imperial Granary next Thursday. It is the opening concert for Italy Jazz Week, also for the whole jazz series in Beijing.

Four jazz ensembles, 3quietmen, Ivan Valentini's Slanting Quintet, Manomanouche and Q with eighteen artists will perform in the concert.

Three young musicians from Turin's 3quietmen combine their different backgrounds to form a contemporary project that is not limited to the boundaries of typical jazz. Ivan Valentini has been a leading figure since the early 1990s, in a variety of musical settings, moving comfortably from improvised music to other forms of art, primarily performing his own compositions.

The four jazz bands, invited by the Cultural Office of the Italian Embassy, represent the best of Italian jazz. Jazz fans will enjoy a typical feast of Italian jazz, the organizer said.

It is the first time, Italian jazz will be presented at The



Manomanouche, one of the recommended Jazz bands for the festival

Photo provided by The Imperial Granary

Imperial Granary, with a seating capacity of 100 people, instead of the music hall and opera shows usually staged here. Special acoustic effects created by the trapezoid-shaped wall and the sloped roof has praised by numerous musicians and sound engineers.

In the following two months, Matt Brubeck from the US and David Braid from Canada, The

Core Norway and Blood Drum Spirit will strut their stuff in the Imperial Granary Jazz Series. This jazz festival lasts until June.

When: 7:30 pm (6:30 buffet), April 10

Where: The Imperial Granary, 22 Dongsishitiao, Chaoyang District

Tel: 6409 6477, 6409 6499

Admission: 980, 780, 580 yuan (including dinner)

Celine Dion refunds tickets

By Gan Tian

Canadian performer Celine Dion canceled her Beijing concert at the Workers' Stadium on April 13 for unknown reasons. Ticket holders can easily get ticket refunds.

For refunds, call 400 707 9999 and 6551 6590, or log online at emma.cn for details. Fans can return tickets to the Emma Ticket Office which will refund the value of the ticket. Don't forget to bring along your ticket receipts as proof of purchase.

The service will last until April 13. Those who are not in Beijing can mail their tickets to: Emma Tickets Office, 509, Gehua Building, 1, Qinglong Hutong, Dongcheng District, Beijing, 100007. The staff will transfer refund amounts to the holder's original account within three days.

The Emma Tickets Office is located on the east side of the north gate of Workers' Stadium with office hours between 9 am 6 pm from today to April 12, and 9 am to 10 pm on April 13.

ASK Beijing Today

Email your questions to: weiyang@ynet.com

I have a mole on my face. What bothers me is that it is painful. Is there a clinic in Beijing specializing in skin and skin problems? Do they speak English and how can I get my mole checked to see if it is cancerous?

Just go to a normal hospital with a Chinese friend if you are concerned about the language barrier. Register at the skin department and tell the doctor you need a cancer check on your mole. The doctor will tell you how to go through the procedure. If you are concerned that they will give you expensive medicine, just tell the doctor you are on the Chinese medical insurance system and you want the medicine prescribed to be included in the medical reimbursement system.

I am living in Chaoyang district and I want to go to the Zhongguancun Electric markets, but I heard it was very busy and hard to bargain. Do you know when most electronics shops close there?

Most popular electronics malls in Zhongguancun open at 9 am and close at 7 pm.

I recently read an article from Xinhuanet and it said that some museums in China offer free admission now. But it did not mention if this was true in Beijing or what kind of museums are involved.

Beijing has 29 museums now free to the public free. Beijing Today has a detailed report about it in the last issue. You can find more information by searching google. These museums do not include popular tourist spots like the Forbidden City or Summer Palace, but they are still worth visiting for varied kinds of information including military or nature museums and China's movie history.

What is the average rental price for foreigners in Beijing?

For average young expats in town, sharing is the most economic way for better quality living quarters and the average price will be from 1,500-2,500 yuan per room, depending on locations and house quality.

For expats assigned to work here, their housing reimbursement starts from US \$1,000 and up. And generally speaking, apartments around Moma or Season's Park are cheaper than new residential apartments near Guomao.

(By Wei Ying)

Local menswear fashion n



St Dawee: unchanged but challenging

St Dawee Men's Wear Release A/W 08/09 was held in D Park Central Hall last Friday. As usual, the Xiamen-based men's clothing brand still focuses its special style upon Chinese icons.

The brand still uses red backgrounds, red carpets and red logos staying to the its devotion to China red. This season, long robes, delicate golden embroideries, double-rowed buttons and belts appear and seem to be the main theme of the St Dawee's show.

The main colors still target black,

dark blue, grey, silver and dark brown. The number of colors in each suit always remains at two. Unlike last season, fewer patterns appear this time round.

One of the show's highlights was the long robes, which introduced the audience to the men's style of old Shanghai. Some of the spectators mentioned that this local brand did well in promoting Chinese men's styles. "The long cut reminded all of those extraordinary fashion years in China," Wang Xiaohui, a fashion reporter said.

Zeng Fengfei, the designer's tip



Q: What's your understanding of the Chinese man's physical features, and what elements do you use to suit those features?

A: Chinese men are smaller and thinner and their skin is darker than Westerners. Simple colors can show their tenderness. Though long-cuts make them appear physically thinner, it can also show the power of the Chinese man.

Cabbeen: innovative

Last Sunday Cabbeen held its show on a circular runway in the 798 Art District, which broke the common T-stage concept. At the end of the show, five men hovered overhead on a stage supported by ropes. Then the models and the designer appeared on stage their thank-you messages.

The show was one major performance featuring the shaved-headed models with the young urban element take on dressing up being the overall edge. Cabbeen smartly acknowledged the way that contemporary menswear merges day and night by running their show back to front. They opened with a formal look – tuxedo-striped pants with shawl-collared jackets to contrast. In between was a typically gothic collection of items that covered this ever-widening fad. Thrown into the mix were some evening suits, but that romantic flourish was less intriguing than the show's use of technol-



ogy. A big logo featured a mo the proceeding stage with silv that was illum ware. Anyway, were all a testa ble talents.

Cabbeen, designer's

Q: What's your understanding of the Chinese man's physical features, and what elements do you use to suit those features?

A: Chinese men have fewer expressions. I used some modern for example, the silver, gold and quality of Chinese men from the



Pierre Cardin: sculptured s

Pierre Cardin, the French brand, launched in China in the 1980s knows the Chinese market well. It held its A/W 08/09 release at the 798 Art District on Tuesday evening.

This season's creations for men drew mainly from three major sources: photography, modern sculpture and modern painting.

The first part of the collection, Galerie d'Art, was born from photos of Paris and Harley Davidson motorcycles that were taken by the chief designer Sergio Altieri. The men's shirts displayed were mostly in black and white, with a splash of red.

The sculpture's forms made the men's wear come alive in the second part of the show. All the clothes were arranged harmoniously with geometrical shapes



needs a nudge

By Gan Tian

For decades, "style" was not a common word in the Chinese lexicon, especially for Chinese men. With the development of the Chinese fashion industry, more and more men are wearing designer threads and venturing onto this new frontier. Beijing Today attended three Chinese designers' menswear shows during China Fashion Week A/W 08/09 and an international brand show, and talked with a few people within these fashion circles, trying to find out the status quo.

been



suspended over the catwalk
modern style forensic look at
s, and the round but dark
er lights displayed clothing
minated by LED-like hard-
the silver and gold cuttings
ment to Cabbeen's inimita-

Photos provided by Cabbeen

tips:

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nts do you use to gel with

ines on their face and softer
n elements in the designing,
shiny materials, to show the
inside.

Edenbo: from Wall Street to easy street

Edenbo, a Fujian-based menswear brand, does well in dressing both business and casual people, which were the two big categories it addressed to start its A/W 08/09 release.

A jacket in mustard neoprene, for instance, or a zippered top in a flaring acid green, played off against more sober tailoring. The dropped crotch that was featured in many of the trousers on display was derived from the silhouette created when surfers eased themselves out of their wetsuits. Coats were cut fuller in the sleeve.

A long dark coat came loaded with enough dangling braids and fringed epaulets to make one wonder if it had stepped out of a military scenario. A tad weird but possibly wonderful at the same time.

Chen Wen, the designers' tips:



Q: What's your understanding of Chinese men's physical features, and what elements do you use to match those features?

A: Our brand's designs mostly present an "English style." Everyone will notice that most of our menswear F/W collection is needle-weaved with a Scottish square pattern. We just want to present to the local men a British style of apparel. Take it or not, it is your choice.

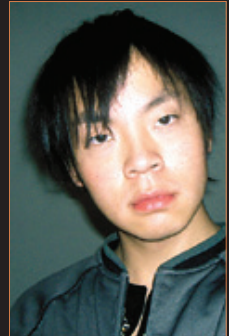


CFP Photo

Chinese men style: challenged

The male fashion business does not only exist in clothing. It is a pity that Chinese fashion designers have not noticed this yet – they have paid too much attention to the clothing itself. Donald C Richardson in his book *Men of Style* writes, "The man of style chooses the basics, then puts them together in a manner that keeps him within the bounds of good taste while still giving him an edge of individuality." To go along with the men's wear business, skin care, hair care, nail care, body fitness and posture and scent should also keep pace with the fashions. Women's fashion in the Chinese market certainly did much better than the men's.

– Liu Yacheng, 27, stylist



Many local brands just plagiarize the international brands' designs, some even without any localization. The cut, material and color choice are three of the biggest problems in local brand's men's wear. There are some exceptions. For example, the local brand, Croquis, I have interviewed its designing director, who told me this brand took into consideration international design and then made it local.

Now in China, the men's fashion market is growing in major cities. Still, most men don't know what to wear, and some with an inkling of taste still have very few choices, resulting in a similarity in Chinese men's styling.

Firstly, Chinese men are built smaller than Westerners. For them, larger clothing is not suitable. Some "Gothic styles" in foreign countries should be brought here for Chinese men, for example, Dior Homme. Secondly, Chinese men's skin is dark brown and I feel that dark, grey, brown and white colors are the best choices.

– Issac Feng, 25, lifestyle reporter at Y Weekend

Chinese male models have many problems displaying the local brands. Though they have a Chinese face, they cannot convey the Chinese characters. In contrast, Chinese female super models, like Du Juan, highlighting the international stage, do a better job. I hope we can have more Du Juan type of men models who are qualified enough to show off our local brands so people will begin to notice men's apparel more.

– Zhang Qiang, 27, fashion reporter at Men's Style

With the international brands coming to China, the local brands face many more challenges than ever before. I personally feel that menswear in China are not designed well. Maybe it's because the men who have the purchasing power are mostly over 30. This is a group who have a more mature taste, so local brands want to cater to them in order make money. However, there is still light at the end of the fashion tunnel. More young men born after 1980 will change the situation, because they will become the mainstream of society and they are much more open-minded.

– Teddy Miu, 27, designer at local men's wear brand Backstage 9



Chinese local brands should create a path of their own. One of the biggest problems for Chinese men is that they do not think clothing and style are important. These traditional thoughts prevent local brands from growing and sharing the market in their own countries. Some of my foreign clients, complain that they cannot find good Chinese men's clothes stores and that the international brands here update their collections slower than those in New York and London.

– Feng Lusha, 24, fashion market representative at City Weekend

Financial limitations are another problem for local brands. Many Chinese models want to walk the catwalk for the international brands instead of the local ones simply because the latter pays them less. They should not think only about business. Because the local menswear market is not mature, the male model market is dragged down to an inferior level. As a model myself, I know this career is tough, but we should be more responsible and support the local brands.

– Ricky Liu, 26, model

Fang Fang, CEO of Pierre Cardin China's tips



Q: What's your understanding of Chinese men's physical features, and what elements do you use to suit those features?

A: One of the biggest problems for Chinese men is that they do not work out. They have unbearable body shapes after they turn 30. Pierre Cardin tries very hard to balance casual and formal suits for these men. I think one solution to this problem is to expand our lines, so that more and more people have different choices.

Photos provided by Pierre Cardin China

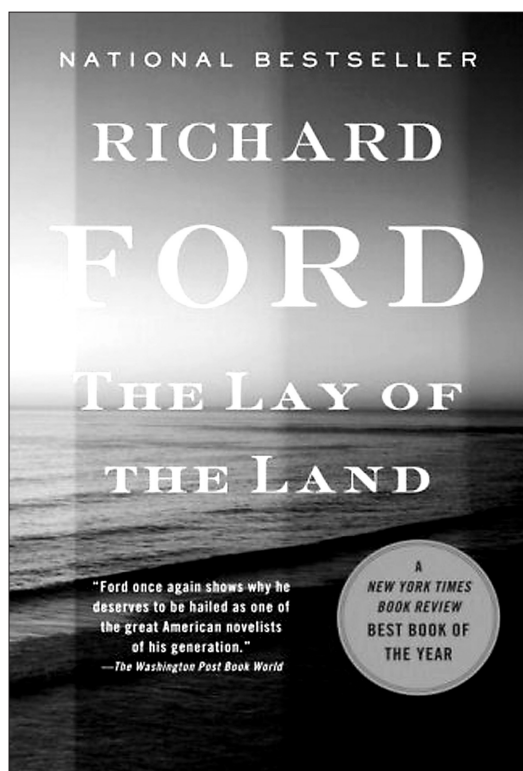
style

l motifs. Trapezoid coats, masculine
thes, down jackets in geometrical
pes, bright colors ranging from short
l-shaped flowers to long pyramids,
re all worn by the male models.

The third installment explained
modern painting and its fashion. Strong
ors were seen in sweaters. There were
sh and pencil strokes, mixed red,
e, yellow and a wide range of other
es, painted on unique nylon jackets.

Alongside the fabrics that were
nted in Japan for the exclusivity
Chinese markets, the male models
o presented a line of bags and
essories, recapturing the essence
the collection: the combined black,
ite and red, and the flowered and
ometrical forms.

An optimist's successor to Updike's Rabbit



By Charles Zhu

From 1986 to 2008, Richard Ford labored to create *Frank Bascombe*, whom many literary critics claim as a successor to John Updike's *Rabbit Angstrom*. In Sports-writer, Ford delineated Frank in his 38 years of age and concluded his career at the age of 55 in *The Lay of the Land* (Knopf, 485 pp, US \$26.95).

Ford said he expresses his artistic belief through Frank's voice. "Life's moments truly come to us heedless, not at the bidding of a gilded fragrance," he wrote. In a psychoanalytical and realistic approach, the author pays less attention to the sequence of a plot than to the spiritual maturity of a man who is preoccupied with the thought of death.

No longer a newly-divorced man with an eye for the ladies, Frank at this stage of life battles prostate cancer after treatment and ponders the meaning of life

and the inevitable future of death. "Death, veteran of death that I am, seems so near now, so plentiful, so oh-so-drastic and significant that it scares me witless."

Frank Bascombe as the father worries about his troubled grown children Clarissa and Paul. The author describes a series of Bascombe's encounters in a seemingly random and practically deliberate way: his second wife abandons him for her former husband, presumed dead but who has actually been living in Scotland all these years. He meets with a stranger who strangely resembles and may indeed be his former lover. He encounters his ex-wife at the De Tocqueville Academy in Haddam, where she teaches golf.

While Frank prepares a Thanksgiving dinner for his son and his one-handed fiancée at Sea Cliff, his former wife comes to the dinner as an uninvited guest and professes her rekindled love for him in a totally pica-

resque scene.

At the age of 56 in the millennium year, suffering from prostate cancer and the loss of his second wife, Frank Bascombe hopes that he may attain a certainty, a definiteness, a state of inhabited being. He is up against his failures, against the final inevitable conclusion of life and against the questions about the worth of living. He is everyman, a typical person of his generation in US society who is all and none of these things. He is an introspective optimist with a sense of black humor. He is a man "with incalculable character, but with a hunger for necessity."

He finally grew up and became mature by learning, in spite of his ambivalence and his waywardness, to face the reality of death and the reality of his own self. The novel concludes by describing Frank being surrounded by other patients at the Mayo Clinic, with the plane descending into Rochester, Minnesota.

Architecture, a kind of memory

By Zhang Dongya

Paul Andreu is best known in China for his design of the National Grand Theater, a futuristic dome, which is considered one of his most spectacular projects and crowning achievements. This time, he comes as a writer.

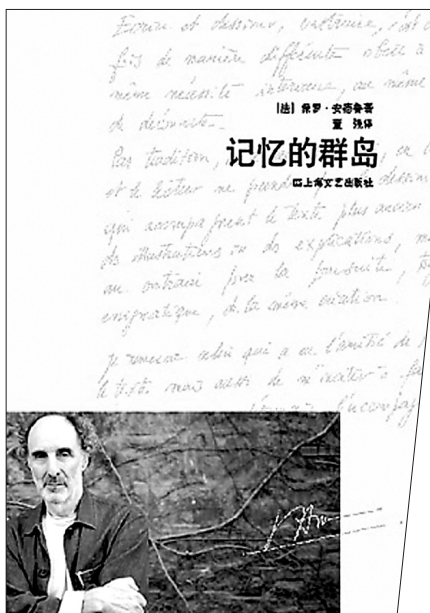
Jiji de Qundao, Islands of Memories (131 pp, Shanghai Wenyi Publishing House, 17 yuan), by Paul Andreu, translated by Dong Qiang, was published last month. Andreu wrote the book during his design of the National Grand Theater, and it is hailed as a "new novel" by French writers Alain Robbe-Grillet and Marguerite Duras.

Andreu's architectural ideas were disputed during the design stages. Facing cultural differences and pressures, he experienced deep struggles. The book records all his thoughts and imaginations, including his past dreams, aging and fear of death.

"You can take it as a 'new novel,' or as a long poem," Andreu said, "I hope my book can inspire in readers new views of life: to rethink life, death and memory."

"Andreu thinks architecture is a collective human memory, and he hopes the theater he designed can be a group of islands to preserve that memory," Dong Qiang, the book's translator and professor of the Beijing University French department, said.

Andreu published *L'Opéra de Pékin, National Grand Theater*, last year. The book is full of architectural drafts, but is still considered a novel by Andreu, "It describes the special experience



during my design of the National Grand Theater."

Islands of Memories, finished five or six years before the publication of *L'Opéra de Pékin*, should have been his real debut. Andreu wrote another concise preface and drew dozens of sketches for the Chinese version.

About the author

Paul Andreu, chief architect of the Paris Airport Company, designed 50 airports in Europe, Asia and Africa – notably the Charles de Gaulle International Airport in 1967. The Shanghai Oriental Arts Center, Pudong airport, the Guangzhou Gymnasium and the Beijing Opera House, all his buildings, define modern China.

CNPIEC Bookstore book listing

The China National Publication Import and Export Corporation's (CNPIEC) bookstore recommends the following new arrivals to *Beijing Today* readers.

Simplexity

By Jeffrey Kluger, 256 pp, John Murray Publishers, 150 yuan

In recent years, cutting-edge studies in fields such as economics, genetics, stock-market analysis and child development have hit on a startling new theory – simplexity. To put it simply, simple things can be more complicated than they seem, and complex things more simple. As simplexity moves from the research lab into popular consciousness, it will challenge our models for modern living.

In the Woods

By Tana French, 464 pp, Penguin, 90 yuan

When a 12-year-old girl from Knocknaree, a Dublin suburb, is found murdered at a local archaeological dig, Rob

Ryan and his partner Maddox must probe deep into the victim's troubled family history. There are chilling similarities between the murder and a disappearance 20 years earlier – two children who were Ryan's best friends. Only Maddox knows Ryan was involved in the 1984 case.

Devil's Teardrop

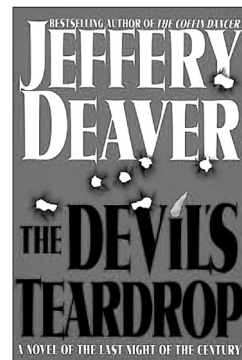
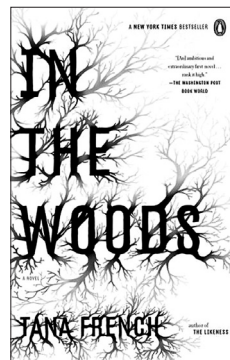
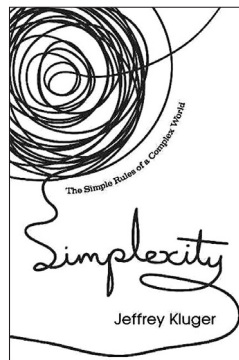
By Jeffery Deaver, 396 pp, Simon&Schuster Ltd, 90 yuan

After a machine gun attack in the Washington, DC, subway system leaves dozens dead, retired FBI document examiner Parker Kincaid must track down the assassin with the aid of only one clue – a ransom note demanding \$20 million to stop further massacres.

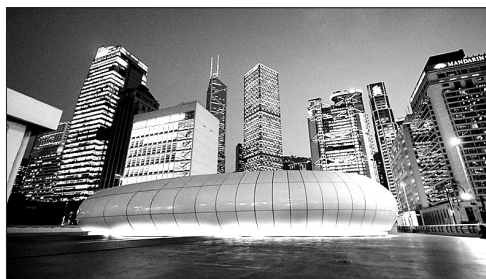
CNPIEC Bookstore

Where: the second floor of CNPIEC, No 16 Gongti Dong Lu, Chaoyang
Open: 8:30 am – 6:30 pm
Tel: 6500 1859, 6592 6871

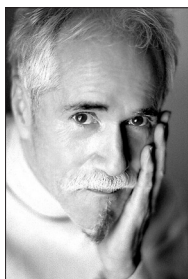
(By Zhang Dongya)



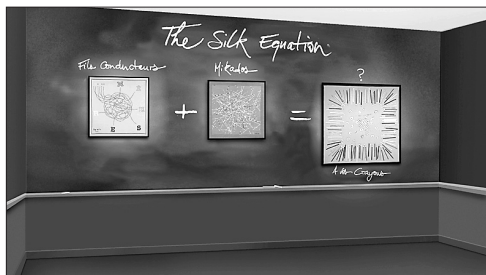
Brands flout artistic side



CHANEL's Mobile Art hits Hong Kong.



Hilton McConnico



The Silk Equation



The Power of Image

Creativity links commercial, artistic

"The Tale of Silk" is an apt name for this exhibition. Reflecting the spirit of its designer, it is full of humor, color, sensations and poetry.

Since McConnico's last exhibition, *Dreams Woven with Silk*, the scarves have evolved. "Some [scarves] are still great classic and others reinterpret the traditional codes of the house with amazing modernity. I'm actually thinking of Cheval surprise, which could easily be a Jackson Pollock," McConnico said.

"More than bold. It is a creation anchored in our time period, a statement about the present. When we create new scarves, the idea is not to shock, but rather to start out by surprising ourselves, to be modern without ignoring our past, to create very beautiful objects born of encounters," Dumas said.

Creativity has been the heart of CHANEL since its beginning; it is the thread that unites Mademoiselle Chanel to Karl Lagerfeld, a visionary spirit known for his skill in anticipating the future of his times.

A traveling project, with admission free to all, *Mobile Art* will circulate for two years throughout Asia, the US and Europe. In a futuristic pavilion, created by the architect Zaha Hadid at the request of Karl Lagerfeld, some 20 international artists will exhibit works inspired by the elements that give the CHANEL bag its identity.

The tour came to Hong Kong at the end of February. Through this collaboration, and resulting from a singular point of view, the multiple facets of this mythical bag and its universe are revealed.

By He Jianwei

Many big brands aim to attract middle-class Chinese customers at art events. Last Monday night, French brand Hermès, gave an exhibition at the Beijing Today Art Museum. It included installations, videos and dance to present the company's scarves. CHANEL is also hosting a world-wide contemporary art exhibition.

Like a bridge between two cultures, the scarf *De passage à Paris* (The Passage of Paris) is on exhibition with a mix of Chinese and Western calligraphies. Through the exhibition "The Tale of Silk," Hilton McConnico has worked in his own unique and poetic fashion with the connections and correlations between the birthplace of this noble material and Hermès, which has been printing on it for 70 years.

Products serve for art

Stylist, designer, photographer, filmmaker and set designer, this American artist in Paris is keen on telling color stories. McConnico would like to tell stories about silk and designed the exhibition *Dream Woven with Silk* for Hermès, in 1996.

The Tale of Silk celebrates the 10th anniversary of Hermès, in China and 70th anniversary of its scarves.

"This exhibition is clearly not a presentation of our 2007 collection. Through its various settings, it is a visual experience and a discovery of the world of printed silk at Hermès," Pierre Alexis Dumas, artistic director of Hermès, said.

By the end of this year, they will have nine stores in China. "It was important for us to unveil our house. To talk about silk and show how we've developed a technique and syntax that are proper to the house using a fiber native to China," he said.

To enter "The Jockeys Circle," the spectator must clear a way through drapes of silk. After the sense of sight, the sense of touch is invoked. Then taste. Two small niches hung with red velvet display a fork and knife on one side and chopsticks on the other.

In another setting, a piece of silk weaves through 360 sabers, illustrating the

paradox of this material, as delicate as it is strong.

Within the framework of this exhibition, McConnico's imagination has filled the space between the scarves and the spectator. "I created these scenes in such a way that there is in fact no solution, not even scarves, although the scarves do lie at the heart of the mystery," McConnico said.

Localization, Chinese artists participate

Three Chinese artists participated in the exhibition with McConnico.

Film director Li Yu made *Silk Tide*, an art film, with Chinese dancer and choreographer Huang Doudou, who leads the dance with a piece of red silk, bringing it to life and making it dance like a partner.

For several years, Dumas wanted to ask Chinese artists to create scarves. When it opened the boutique in Shanghai in 2001, they had already collaborated with choreographer Huang Doudou. "In 2007, the year of the dance, we wanted to work with him again," Dumas said.

Hermès has been a partner of the Deauville Asian Film Festival for several years. Last year, the award went to young director Li Yu. "Without knowing it, when we started working on this project, our Shanghai teams spontaneously suggested that she direct a film, which, in the end, featured Huang Doudou," he said.

Ding Yi's participation was no accident either. "The last time I [went] to Shanghai, I fell in love with the works of contemporary artist Ding Yi. So we invited him to Paris. He visited our creation studio, our workshops in Lyon and, four months later, he sent us an outstanding scarf design," he said.



Hilton McConnico works in a unique and poetic fashion and is keen to tell colorful stories.

Photos provided by Ruder Finn

Sole's sun showers



The best under the sun: Enjoy like a VIP

By Li Fenghua

The Sole Tanning Studio established its first studio in Beijing last September.

A warm and comfortable room which provided free coffee and wireless internet surfing was offered me when I first entered the Beijing Sole Tanning Studio. The wall was mounted with hand-work drawings. There are three tanning rooms and a VIP room in the studio. When I stepped inside one of the vertical tanning machine, all of the ultraviolet lamps shed warmth on me as if from the sun. But it is healthier than the sun's rays since the harmful rays are filtered out by the tanning machine.

"The dazzling light won't harm your eyes, if you feel uncomfortable, just close your eyes," Chen Zhan, the general manager of Sole tanning studio said. "The temperature inside gradually increase to about 40 degrees centigrade in about 20 minutes, "For your first time, a lengthy tanning session is not suggested."

When you go to the tanning studio, staff consultants will ask what kind of color you want and examine your skin type and then give professional suggestions. There are three colors that rank from a light to a deep color and they are wheat color, light yellow color and the bronze color. The tanning colors for women are lighter than for men.

"More than 50 percent of our customers are Europeans and Americans where tanning is very popular in their own country. About 20 percent are from Japan and Hong Kong. The rest are native Chinese, such as entertainers from show business circles.

Extra services are offered to customers at the Sole tanning studio such as two hours of free parking, free coffee and free Internet. And there are special free VIP services. Vertical and horizontal tanning machines are present due to various preferences and there is a VIP tanning room which provides independent lavatory and bathing facilities.

If you want to sport a different body color and enjoy a private warm atmosphere in the crowded city, you're invited to step inside the Sole Beijing Tanning Studio.

Sole Beijing Tanning Studio

Where: Jiangwai SOHO 1032, Dongsanhuan Zhonglu39, Chaoyang District
Open: 10 am - 9 pm
Tel: 8783 9696



The lobby of Sole Beijing Tanning Studio

VIP room



Photos provided by Sole Beijing Tanning Studio

Get down with brown

By Gan Tian

Spring is coming. Time to take off your clothes and show off your beautiful brown skin. Now white chicks are not popular any more, but brown-skinned cuties turn heads. *Beijing Today* examines three popular tanning salons in town.



Excellent 42/4

A vertical tanning booth



The heat is on: professional care

By Gan Tian

DB Tanning Salon, located in Jianwai SOHO, is surrounded by variety of beauty salons, but it stands out because of its new tanning accelerators.

Dean Zhang opened the salon with his friend in April last year. "We have done research on this market. It is really growing in China," Zhang said, "now we have new customers everyday. Our customers mainly are people into fashion, foreigners and people who are working out."

When you walk into the place, a bright corridor, decorated with glass closets, spreads under your feet. There are different tanning products on display making this small area very colorful. You feel like you have walked onto a sun-drenched beach.

The help desk sits at the end of corridor. Behind it, there are three separate rooms, in which you can enjoy different tanning services. In the nearest one, there is a vertical sun bed, a Tandome 200 Turbo which the shop installed last Sunday. In the second room is another accelerator, the Excellent 42/4, in which you can lay down and enjoy music while getting tanned. The last room houses a Tancan 8000, which offers mild sun rays.

Zhang, the shop owner, majored in clinical medical and gave professional suggestions to every customer who wanted a tan. "First I wanted to know what his or her skin was like. Are there any problem with their skin? And then I would ask what degree color he or she wanted. And finally I would make a tan plan for the customer," Zhang said.

At present, he said the shop provides different packages for customers. The most recommended two are 900 yuan for one month, and 1,100 yuan for 20 sessions. Reasonable? If you think so, drop in the next time you pass Jianwai SOHO.

DB Tanning Salon

Where: 4307, Building 4, Jianwai SOHO, 39, Dongsanhuan Zhong Lu, Chaoyang District
Open: 11 am - 9 pm
Tel: 5900 0427

Photos by Neil Hunting

Bronze your bodies: The trendiest in town

By Zhang Dongya

Bronze Bodies, founded in 2005, boasts the first professional tanning studio in Beijing.

With classic-style decor, Bronze Bodies has a quiet lobby and four tanning rooms. An extensive range of tanning skin care products are exhibited for selection.

For newcomers, Bronze Bodies carries out a brief skin test and offers some practical advice, including the type of equipment they can use and the suitable tanning duration.

Bronze Bodies has a Web site only in English. "About 90 percent of our customers are foreigners," Todd, manager of Bronze Bodies said.

The other 10 percent of Chinese customers, "They are mainly actors, singers, fitness coaches, and people who often play golf and other outdoor sports activities," Todd said.

Bronze Bodies is equipped with advanced tanning beds from Germany. KBL-MegaSun, one of the largest and most advanced solarium manufacturers in the world, ensures Bronze Bodies franchisee the most competitive and technology-advanced equipment.

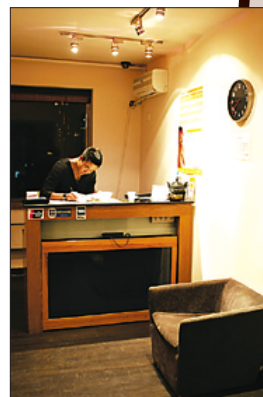
A new MegaSun tanning booth for "upright" fans who like to stand while tanning was introduced in February. It was designed with two upper tanning lamps especially for your shoulders and a mirrored floor which can reflect the light better.

"Compared with other tanning salons, Bronze Bodies has reasonable prices and excellent equipment. The lamps tan gently so you can stay longer," Xiaoshan, an art editor of Beijing Youth Weekly (BQ), said. Xiaoshan has been tanning at Bronze Bodies for half a year, and she visits every week for 10 minutes.

The Bronze Bodies Tanning Studio is Asia's leading tanning studio chain. Now, it has three branches, with two in Shanghai. A new "IC System" is used in their studios, and you can use one card at the three locations.

Bronze Bodies

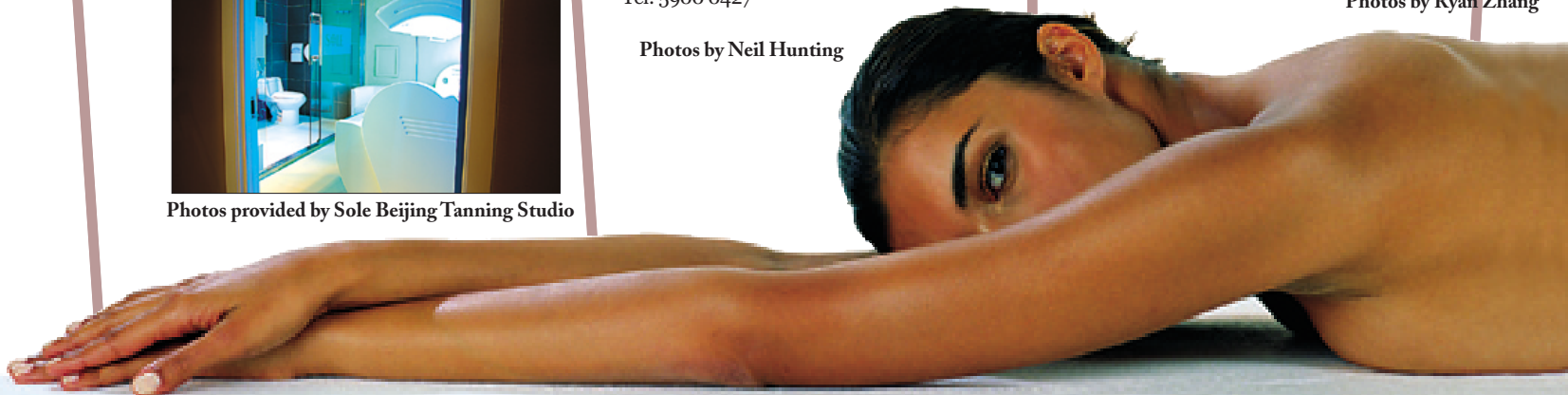
Where: 6/F, 17 Gongti Bei Lu, Chaoyang District
Open: 11 am - 9 pm
Tel: 6413 1180



The lobby



MegaSun Tanning Tower
Photos by Ryan Zhang



By He Jianwei

Few cities have been home to as many famous composers as Vienna, which remains a breeding ground for the musical avant-garde and hosts a vibrant performance scene.

It is also a vibrant home for fine Viennese food. The Vienna Representative Office invited three chefs from Vienna's MODUL, the European Training Center for Hospitality and Tourism, to present a special "Vienna Spring Festival" from last Friday to April 6 at the Great Wall Sheraton. "In all, the Viennese food has a strong and heavy taste," Christian Zauful, one of the chefs, said.

Taste the spirit of Vienna



Christine Egger

At the Silk Road Restaurant of the Great Wall Sheraton, the waitress wore a costume in Viennese palace style. "The Pearl of Vienna," an all-female classical chamber music ensemble from the prestigious Vienna Conservatory and University of Music and Performing Arts, performed at the Atrium Bar.

Dessert means delivering happiness

The hotel will present a dessert buffet in the Atrium Bar in the spirit of a traditional Viennese coffee house from 3 to 6 pm every day from March 28 to April 6.

The team of chefs includes master pastry chef Christine Egger, who spent 20 years mastering the finest desserts and has been awarded the title of "Master Pastry Chef."

Egger has studied dessert and cake production for 40 years. Before she became a master pastry chef, Egger studied in Switzerland one year and worked in a coffee house in Austria.

Among her dozens of different desserts and cakes, Egger believed Sachertorte is a must taste. Sachertorte is a kind of chocolate cake, invented by Franz Sacher in 1832. Sacher was a 16-year-old apprentice when he had to substitute for the sick chef at Prince Metternich's court. He created the dessert for some particularly demanding guests.

The receipt of the original Sachertorte is a well-kept secret, but this cake tastes almost the same. The ingredients include butter, dark chocolate, powdered sugar, eggs, white sugar, flour and apricot marmalade.

The cake consists of two layers of dense, not overly sweet chocolate cake. It is traditionally a sponge cake with a thin layer of apricot jam in the middle and dark chocolate icing with shreds of chocolate on the top and sides.

"Traditionally, it is served with whipped cream without any sugar in it, as most Viennese consider the Sachertorte too dry to be eaten on its own," Egger said.

Her second recommendation is Kardinal, which "is a kind of traditional dessert in Austria. [It was first] recorded in an Austrian cooking book in 1873," she said. Kardinal is made of coffee and cream. It tastes like a sponge cake: soft and creamy.

Viennese desserts are not too sweet, and most are made of fresh fruit. "I have a small garden in my house. I planted apricots, blackberries, red berries and apples. When they mature, I will pick them to make dessert," Egger said.

She said that, as a pastry chef, she aims to make their eaters feel happy. "Making pastries is an art. I will be happier if people taste my desserts and feel happy," she said.

Silk Road Restaurant

Meat is the appetizer

At the entrance of the restaurant, appetizers are served. "Cold cuts are the typical appetizers in Viennese food and most of them are meats," Zauful said.

Pork and beef slices are popular in Vienna, especially raw sliced ham. This ham tastes a bit chewy. "Meat, meat and meat again. We love to eat meat as an appetizer," he said.

Even the bread is stuffed with veal. "We mix eggs, milk and veal breast, roll them in a bread and bake them together," he said. The bread does not taste like meat when you have a bite of the stuffed part.

Erdapfelsalt, a kind of potato salad, is a typical appetizer. The salad includes potatoes, red onion, vinegar, oil, salt and pepper. "Don't cook the potatoes too long and cut them into slices. Mix a marinade by using vinegar, oil, salt and pepper and pour it over the salad," he said.



Kardinal

Photos by Wang Haoran

Viennese Food Festival

Dishes are served buffet style for lunch and dinner at the Silk Road Restaurant.

Where: Silk Road Restaurant, the Great Wall Sheraton Hotel Beijing, 10 North Dongsanhuan Lu, Chaoyang District
When: March 28 - April 6, 12 am - 2 pm, 6-10:30 pm

Cost: 195 yuan per person for lunch, 268 yuan per person for dinner
Tel: 6590 5566 ext 2117



Wiener Schnitzel

Main course is typical home cooking

Most of the main courses in Viennese food are sausage. Besides the famous sausage, Egger and Zauful recommend two other main dishes from their family menus.

Wiener Schnitzel (Viennese cutlet) is a traditional Austrian dish and a popular part of Viennese and Austrian cuisine. For the

traditional Wiener Schnitzel, the Viennese normally use veal and fry it in lard.

The cutlet will need to be pounded until the meat is a little more than half a centimeter thick. Make sure to trim the edges of the meat carefully.

Lightly season the cutlet with

salt and pepper. "You will need three shallow bowls: one for the eggs, one for flour and one for breadcrumbs. Dip the cutlet in the flour first, then in the whisked egg and then in the breadcrumbs. Be careful to ensure that the entire cutlet is completely covered with the breadcrumbs," she said.

Place the cutlet in a hot frying pan, the oil in the pan should be deep enough that the schnitzel's float whilst cooking. Cooking time should not be more than four minutes for each side.

He recommends Tyrolean-style potato, potato pieces with bacon. "It is a typical food in my

home, but it contains a lot of calories. If you care about your figure then avoid it," he said.

Vegetable soup is a good complement to the main course. The soup contains mixed vegetables and cream. "You can choose the vegetables you like. For example, we can add carrots and spinach," he said.

Dining

**Zin journey**

Let the Seghesio family vineyards guide you on a Zinfandel wine journey. An acclaimed guest chef in Westin has created a specific menu with dishes like tagliatelle with duck braised in Zinfandel, dried figs and pine nuts that perfectly compliments the Seghesio Sonoma and old vine Zinfandels all month.

Where: Prego, the Westin Beijing, 9B Jinrong Jie, Xicheng

When: 11 am – 11:30 pm

Cost: 750 yuan (all prices subject to 15% service charge)

Tel: 6629 7815

Asparagus promotion

It's asparagus season again! Starting Tuesday, April 8, every day for lunch and dinner you can enjoy delicious, white asparagus at Die Kochmützen. The menu features many different asparagus dishes, for example, there's one with Hollandaise sauce and new potatoes.

Where: Die Kochmützen, 718, Building 7, Jianwai SOHO, 39 Dongsanhuan Zhong Lu, Chaoyang

Open: Daily 11 am – 11 pm

Tel: 5869 3830



Aviation

**Emirates launches new Chinese website**

Emirates Airline has recently flown into a new technological frontier by providing a gateway to China in a co-ordinated re-launch of its Web site emirates.cn (Chinese). The website has been proven to be extremely welcomed by passengers in China.

One of the major advantages of the new Chinese site is the flight search and pricing system. Rather than just being presented with one price for a preferred time, pas-

sengers will be shown seat availability and prices for seven days either side of their requested travel date. This will give customers more opportunities to benefit from cheaper fares that may be available. The Web site currently accepts foreign currency cards and dual-currency cards.

Online customers can purchase tickets, confirm a booking, check-in online and choose their preferred seat. The booking process has been simplified, underlining the ease, flexibility and passenger-led nature of the new system. With the airline's internet sales doubling yearly, Emirates is again moving to meet its customers' online requirements.

The site is currently divided into four main areas: "Flying with Emirates" which contains information about the Emirates' travel experience, "Destinations & Offers" which contains information on the latest deals, "Plan & Book" where users can make or manage a booking and "Skywards" with valuable information about the frequent flyer program.

Outdoors

**Tiger valley**

The hike starts from one of the smaller tombs in the Ming Tombs area. This particular tomb was built by a Ming Dynasty emperor for one of his wives. From the tomb you will head towards the hills, passing a village on the way to a mountain trail that leads up and over a ridge in the surrounding hills.

It takes about an hour and a half to reach the pass on the ridge, and from there you will descend into Tiger Valley.

Sichuan Wolong pandas and Leshan Giant Buddha

Sichuan, southeast of Tibet, hosts several UNESCO-listed World Heritage Sites. One of them is the Leshan Giant Buddha Statue, the largest Buddha statue ever carved into a mountain. It is over 71 meters high and there is enough space for more than 100 people to sit between its feet. The Wolong Panda Natural Reserve is the only panda reserve in the world, providing the ideal natural environment for pandas, mountains, rivers and bamboo forests. It is different from the Panda Breeding Center in the capital Chengdu.

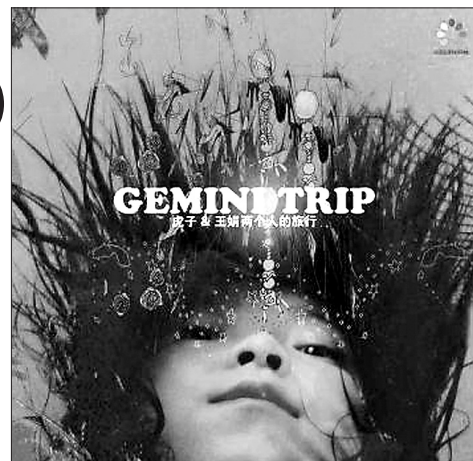
When: Fly to Chengdu on April 4 and return on April 6

Cost: 4,800 yuan

Tel: 6432 9341, 6432 1041 (reservations are essential)

(By Li Jing)

Nightlife

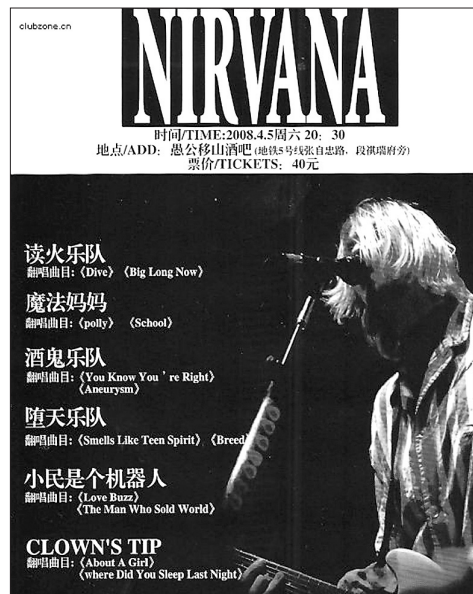
**Wang Juan Spring Concert**

Where: The Star Live, F/3, 79 Hepingli Xijie, Dongcheng

When: 8:30 pm, April 5

Admission: 40 yuan

Tel: 6425 5677

**Cherry lane**

Where: Yugong Yishan, West Coutyard former site of Duan Qirui Government, 2-3 Zhangzizhong Lu, Dongcheng

When: 9 pm – 2 am next day, April 5

Admission: 40 yuan

Tel: 6404 2711



If you have any info for this page, please send it to lixiaojing@ynet.com

CFP Photo

7

**Liu Ruannai, 33,
housewife**

Liu Ruannai takes care of her 36-year-old husband and six-year-old son. "It's a pretty tough job, especially their diets."

Liu's husband and son only have dinner at home, which keeps her five o'clock time period pretty hectic. "Nothing is more depressing to a housewife than seeing a messy refrigerator, but I have my own solution."

Her way of arranging the fridge makes it more convenient and tidy. "To some extent, I think it is healthier for me, because it eases my stress. It is also healthy for my family – a neat refrigerator prevents bacteria and illness," Liu said.

The Ruannai plan

Step 1: Take everything out of the fridge. Liu said that an empty refrigerator is a start. "Some people think they can make changes with all food still crammed on the shelves. No way," she said, "You must start with the fridge completely empty so your plan can work." She also mentioned that with this first step you can easily recognize and discard all the unused and expired foods.

Step 2: As you use food like butter and cream cheese frequently, Liu suggests that you put them into the refrigerator door. "A covered section can usually be found at the top of the door, but if not, put these items on the top shelf," she said. Another reason is that these foods will permeate and alter the flavors of nearby foods.

Step 3: Place your sauces, dressings, condiments and cheese on the remaining shelves of the door. Liu has chili sauce, salad dressing, ketchup and cheddar cheese there.

Step 4: "Your drinks can go on the largest shelf of your fridge's interior," Liu said, "My husband loves drinking ice-cold beer. There is a separate space for that." This is usually on the inside top shelf. "My son loves milk and apple juice, and sometimes

we have friends over who enjoy soda. Place them here as well. It is convenient if someone goes to get a drink. The beverages are in an obvious and easily-seen area of the refrigerator," she said.

Step 5: "My family love sandwiches, so we have a good place for sandwiches," Liu said. There are usually two drawers at the bottom of the fridge. In one, put vegetables, like lettuce, herbs, tomatoes and peppers. In the other, put meats that do not need to be frozen, such as sandwich cold cuts, sausages, and pepperoni and sandwich meats. "If you live in a home where you do not make sandwiches with cold cuts, you can divide the veggies into two sections with one section for fruits – but we usually don't refrigerate fruits. They are better when eaten fresh."

Step 6: Now separate the rest of your food. You will often have yogurt, sour cream, eggs and similar food products. Put them together on a shelf along with your "leftovers." Fill up the remaining shelves with food products that share things in common.

Step 7: In the freezer, separate the ice cream, meats, frozen foods and "leftovers" into organized sections.

Fresh ideas to fix up the fridge

7

**Shan Dandan, 23,
student**

Shan got the National Certification for Advanced Nutritionist in 2006 when she was still a sophomore. She knows well that, according to a nutrition catalogue, related foods should be put together. "The idea of putting foods you eat most at the front of the fridge sometimes causes problems," Shan said, "However, if you have a clear mind and good food knowledge, you can get your items well-organized."

The Dandan Plan

Step 1: Remove all the items from your fridge. As you go, discard any stale food that is turning into a science project. Shan warned never to put rotten food in your fridge. "Never think that foods won't rot in the refrigerator," Shan said, "Sometimes they deteriorate more rapidly. They can become killers inside your cooler, especially bacteria forming on rotting meat."

Step 2: Clean all the shelves and drawers with soap and water. Don't forget to scrub down as much of the walls and floor of the fridge as you can, especially under the crisper drawers.

Step 3: Odor is another health factor in the refrigerator. Shan shared some words of personal wisdom: if there is a smell in your refrigerator, buy some freshly ground coffee, and dump one to two cups of the coffee grounds onto a large plate and then spread them around. Use multiple plates if the smells are extreme. Close the refrigerator for 24 to 48 hours, and then dispose of the coffee grounds and replace the food.

Step 4: Use the refrigerator's top shelf for foods which are extremely perishable. Do not store them in the door since that area of the fridge is the warmest. Butter may turn rancid if not kept cool enough. Likewise, eggs should never sit in the door tray, but should remain in their original cardboard or foam carton, which protects them from cracking, absorbing odors, and drying out. Other items not to store in the door: tubes of biscuit and cookie dough, sour cream, cheese and milk.

Step 5: Poultry, fish, raw meat and fresh dairy products, such as milk and cream, should sit on the bottom shelf of the fridge.

Step 6: The meat drawer is usually at the bottom of the refrigerator and therefore is quite cold. Most crisper drawers have a slightly higher humidity level so foods like celery stalks won't wilt quickly.

Step 7: And finally, remember it is a good idea to place food products like salad dressings, salsa, beer, wine, pickles, jams, jellies on the door shelves.

By Gan Tian

When you have finally made up your mind to do a little house cleaning, do include on your list re-arranging the refrigerator. Single people, in particular, should know that it relates to your good health and for housewives, it's much more important than applying makeup. *Beijing Today* has invited an experienced housewife and a young dietitian to give you some cool ideas focused on convenience and usefulness.

Saddle up for spring tours

By Annie Wei

The flowers are budding and now is the time to mount up for a tour of the spring sights.

Wulaza, founder of the Beijing horse club, introduces three top places where he and other horse-lovers ride on weekends.



Beijing horse club members play polo on the outskirts of town. Photo by Wulaza

Bashang Grassland

The Bashang Grassland is 280 kilometers north of Beijing. Its special climate and geographic position at the junction of the North China Plain and the Inner Mongolia Grassland give Bashang a unique natural landscape. The grassland is a popular destination for tourists and photographers.

The grasslands include four parts: Fengning Bashang, Zhangbei Bashang, Weichang Bashang and Guyuan Bashang. The four parts are located in four counties of Hebei Province. Fengning Bashang is the site that is most accessible for visitors from Beijing.

With a mean temperature much lower than that of Beijing, the Bashang Grassland is an ideal place to escape the summer heat. The period from May through November is the best time to visit, and visitors may have a chance to admire scenery in the snow as early as October.

In recent years, tourism to Bashang has flourished and many activities are available. It is inexpensive and interesting to stay at a farmers' home and eat roast, whole sheep and other plain food, chat with the farmers and sleep on heated brick beds.

Besides the charm of Bashang, visitors coming from Beijing can enjoy the beautiful scenery during the six-hour drive along mountain highways and relax at restaurants run by farmers.

Getting there: Go to the Liuliqiao bus center to take a long distance bus. It is also known as the Beijing Haoda Communication Development Center.

Call 8383 1716 or 8383 1717 for a bus schedule.

It is easy to find hotels in Bashang. The price is a bit higher on weekends, at 200 yuan per person. Rent a van or jeep for 300 yuan for half a day.

Tianmo Desert

Tianmo desert is located in the Longbao Mountains in the southwest of Donghuayuan, Huailai, 90 kilometers from Beijing. As the western exit of Beijing, the desert links together the Badaling Great Wall and Kangxi Grassland.

There are two massive sand dunes. The east sand dune is more than 300 meters long from north to south and the west one is nearly a kilometer long.

The scenic spot is at the foot of the Qipan Mountains in the south and beside the Guanting Reservoir on the

north. It has a view of scenic splendors such as Tianmo Desert, together with mountains, grassy marshland and Gobi.

There is no sand nearby for several hundred kilometers. Some guess that the desert was formed by fierce north-west winds, piling-up grains of sand or by changing river courses. Some research has been done, but much remains a mystery.

Aside from riding, you can also go sand skiing, have a bonfire party, ride camels or drive.

There are Mongolian yurts and typical local restaurants in the scenic spot. Several other holiday resorts nearby can also provide board and lodging.

Getting there: Start in Beijing, drive on the Beijing-Zhangjiakou Expressway to Donghuayuan Exit, turn westward to Yekang Road. You can also take a train from Beijing South Railway Station to Guanting Station and then get there by bus.

Kangxi Grassland

Kangxi Grassland is southwest of Yanqing Country, a floodplain of the Guanting Reservoir. As the quantity of water could hardly reach the reservoir capacity, a large grassland was formed. In 1988, the Yanqing County government decided to experiment by opening the grassland as a tourist site. In 1990, Kangxi Grassland formally opened as a scenic spot.

The grassland is a great site for horse racing, camel racing, archery and fishing. There is a standard horse riding field inside the scenic spot, with many horses available for tourists to ride. There are also bountiful Mongolian foods such as roast goat, roast rabbit, milk tea, fried rice, kumiss, cheese and milk fruit.

On the square, visitors can attend bonfire evening, enjoy Inner Mongolian songs and dances and listen to the playing of the morin khuur. On a three-story Islamic dome-type iron tower, visitors can see Haituo Peak and Guanting Reservoir in the distance, and a panorama of the grassland.

There are rich animal and plant resources on the Kangxi Grassland, including 50 grasses such as clover, wild chrysanthemum and cogon grass, more than 20 birds such as the heron, wild duck, wild goose, gray crane and more than 10 animals such as wild rabbit, fox and badger.

Getting there: Take the Badaling expressway.



The grassland is a great site for horse racing, camel racing, archery and fishing.

CFP Photos

Notes

For information on housing and touring on horseback, contact horse.org.cn. The group organizes horse riding events frequently and basic costs are well-divided.



Coastal Kenya safari

By Jackie Zhang

For many centuries, the Kenya Coast has been known as a land of pleasure and recreation. Masai Mara National Reserve is the most famous wildlife park in the country. Many people visit for the wildlife, but visitors should be aware that the country has more captivating scenery.

It's more than just wildlife

Kenya tourism officials' invitation

Last week, the Kenya Travel Board (KTB) held press conferences in Shanghai, Beijing and Guangzhou. The ambassador of the Republic of Kenya and senior officials of KTB hoped to restart the tourism industry in Kenya, which was impacted by rioting at the end of last year.

The officials said there is more to see and do in Kenya besides watching animals. "Playing golf in Kenya is interesting," Jennifer Opondo, marketing manager of KTB, said, "On Mount Kenya, you can hit the ball between northern and southern hemispheres."

Henry Yim, marketing manager of the KTB Far East Office, suggested coastal Kenya for tourists. "The Lamu Island is one of the places Zheng He sailed on his journey to the west. There are Chinese descendants living on the island."

Lamu Island, east in the west

On the remote north coast lies the Lamu archipelago, a dreamy island chain fed by warm Indian Ocean currents. Lamu Island has one town and three villages.

Popularly known to the coastal residents as "Lamu tamu," the Swahili word for an alluring Lamu, the island seems to remain a time capsule.

Famed for its narrow winding lanes synonymous ancient Arab urban design, and similar to the ones found in Mombasa's Old Town and Zanzibar's Stone City, donkeys and dhows comprise the main form of transport here.

The scruffy narrow alley walls are all but part of Lamu's magical charm, whose Swahili and Muslim culture has remained unchanged for centuries.

Built in coral stone and mangrove timber, the town is characterized by the simplicity of structural forms enriched by features such as inner courtyards, verandas and elaborately-carved wooden doors, with roofs mainly made from palm leaves. Lamu doors are famous for their size and intricacy of carving, but their grandeur contrasts amusingly with the crumbling walls of the buildings.

It is a peaceful tropical island where life is lived at its own pace and relaxed rhythm, but a place whose history is as mysterious and fascinating as the winding streets of its medieval stone town, where Lamu's real attraction is to be found.

The residents are friendly and willing to take visitors around to see the island's rich historic sites, including a warlike fort built by the Sultan of Oman in 1810. From this fort, one can look down on the busy market place trading in fruit, vegetables and large white blocks of coral used for building and decoration.

According to legend, over 600 years ago, when Zheng He sailed to the west seven times, he passed by the Lamu

archipelago. One of his ships lost its way and sank off the islands, and the survivors settled down and intermarried with the locals.

Even today, many residents on the island look Chinese. Local residents live on fishing, but they also feed silkworms and spin silk – techniques learned from Chinese sailors.

Historical evidence indicates that the Chinese introduced stone buildings, which are still found in the old Shanga town in Lamu, and Chinese porcelain adorns the roofs and walls of many houses.

Getting there: Lamu is best accessed by air. There are scheduled flights daily from Nairobi, Kenya. Dhow ferries are available between town and villages. There are no vehicles on Lamu. The winding streets of the towns are best explored on foot. It is also possible to hire donkeys to ride around the island.

Malindi, quiet relaxing hideaways

The small town of Malindi is at the center of a strip of idyllic tropical beaches offering the visitor a range of world class resorts and quiet relaxing hideaways. Further south, the sleepy village of Watamu is fronted by wide white beaches. This tranquil haven is home to several well-established resorts, and many private guest houses scatter the shoreline.

Northwest of Malindi is the spectacular Marafa Depression, known locally as Nyari and popularly known as Hell's Kitchen. An extensive series of sandstone gorges and sheer gullies, this unique and otherworldly landscape has become part of local folklore.

The thick jungles of the Arabuko Sokoke Forest reserve hide a world of wonders. In the cool of the forest winding paths will take you in search of rare birds and mammals, and herds of elephants.

The forest holds another secret, the lost town of Gedi, a deserted trading Swahili town hidden deep in the forests, whose winding passages and crumbling walls tell of a long and mysterious past.

Getting there: The gateway to the North Coast is Mombasa, although some visitors fly directly to Malindi. Malindi airport has daily scheduled flights to Mombasa, Nairobi and Lamu. The airport also serves private charters.

Tana River Delta, a taste of wilderness

Tana River Delta is an ideal destination for swimming, game viewing and bird watching. Internationally recognized as one of Kenya's most important wetland areas, it gives a very exciting taste of wilderness. The place seems tailor-made for those who want to enjoy a wildlife safari but with a difference. The 40-kilometer wide delta is the land of pure nature, comprising bubbling streams, pristine lakes, undulating dunes and vast stretches of Savannah grasslands.

Tana River Delta is the home of animals like elephants, bushbucks, buffalo and reedbucks. All these beasts can be seen wandering freely on the grasslands. Birds found here include Reed Warblers, Sand plovers, Spoonbills, Gull-billed Terns, Snake Eagles, Egrets, Storks, Pelicans, Bee-eaters, Storks, Ibis, Kingfishers and Hornbills.

To explore the presence of hippos and crocodiles in the marshy swamps, you are advised to go on a canoe trip. You can go on beach combing expeditions or indulge in photographing buffaloes. Exciting boat trips could provide you the immense joy of bird watching.

Getting there: Tana River Delta exists north of the famous Kenya beach town of Malindi. It is best accessed by road, about a three-hour drive. It is formed when the mighty Tana River flows into the Indian Ocean.

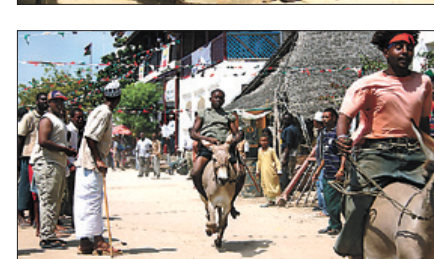
An overview of Malindi
Photos by Pbase.com



The couch-grass-roof house by the Lamu seaside.



Local people's quiet and simple life



Scene of a local village in Malindi.

ATONEMENT (2007)

JOINED BY LOVE. SEPARATED BY FEAR. REDEEMED BY HOPE.

Movie of the Week

Atonement is a successful adaptation of Ian McEwan's novel of the same name, directed by Joe Wright, with strong performances by James McAvoy and Keira Knightley. It opened the 2007 Venice International Film Festival, making Wright - at the age of 35 - the youngest director ever to open the event. The film was nominated for seven Oscars at the 80th Academy Awards, including Best Picture and Best Supporting Actress. It earned one Academy Award for Best Original Score and two BAFTA Awards including Best Film of the Year at the 61st British Academy Film Awards.

Synopsis

Robbie Turner, the educated son of the Cecilia Tallis family's housekeeper, is accused of a crime he did not commit by Briony Tallis, a 13-year-old fledgling writer. Cecilia and Robbie declare their love for each other, but he is arrested - and with Briony bearing false witness, the course of three lives is changed forever. Briony continues to seek forgiveness for her childhood misdeed. Through a terrible and courageous act of imagination, she finds the path to her uncertain atonement, and to an understanding of the power of enduring love to him explaining their situation, and he makes an opportunity for a relationship to arise. While helping a client with his own love-interest, Hitch meets a gossip-columnist who may just change his outlook on love, though love has been what he's been dealing with every day of his life.

Scene 1:

In the yard - Day

Paul Marshall: My source at the Ministry is very reliable. I used to clean his shoes at Harrow. He informs me we have a good chance of including it in the standard issue ration pack which means that I'd have to open at least three more factories. More if they bring in conscription⁽¹⁾, which I say is bound to happen if Herr Hitler doesn't pipe down⁽²⁾. He's about as likely to do that as buy shares in Marks and Spencer's, wouldn't you agree?

Cecilia: This isn't very good.

Paul Marshall: I made a cocktail with crushed ice, rum and melted dark chocolate. It's absolutely scrumptious.

Leon: Guess who we met on the way in?

Cecilia: Robbie.

Leon: I told him to join us tonight.

Cecilia: Oh, Leon, you didn't.

Leon: So, Robbie, the housekeeper's son, whose father did a bunk⁽³⁾ 20 years ago, gets a scholarship to the local grammar, the old man puts him through Cam-

Fiona: Do you think all of this will be bombed and just disappear?

Tallis: No. I don't know.

Fiona: Do you write about Sister Drummond? Do you write about me?

Tallis: Sometimes.

Fiona: Can I look?

Tallis: I'd rather you didn't. It's private.

Fiona: I don't see any point in writing a story if you're not going to let anyone read it.

Tallis: It's not ready yet. It's unfinished.



bridge, goes up at the same time as Cee, and for three years she hardly speaks to him. Wouldn't let him within a mile of her chums⁽⁴⁾.

Cecilia: Anyone got a cigarette?

Leon: I don't know what the hell he's doing these days, messing about⁽⁵⁾ in flower beds.

Scene 2:

London - Night

Tallis: Fiona, I almost jumped out of my skin⁽⁶⁾.

Fiona: So this is where you duck⁽⁷⁾ to after lights out. I thought you might be in the middle of some tempestuous romance. Don't you freeze to death up here?

Tallis: I love London.

Host: By what? Sorry. Served by honesty?

Briony: By honesty. Or reality.

Because, in fact, I was too much of a coward to go and see my sister in June, 1940. I never made that journey to Balham. So the scene in which I confess to them is imagined. Invented. And, in fact, could never have happened. Because Robbie Turner died of septicaemia at Bray-Dunes on June the first, 1940, the last day of the evacuation. And I was never able to put things right with⁽⁸⁾ my sister, Cecilia, because she was killed on the 15th of October, 1940, by the bomb that destroyed the gas and water mains above Balham tube station. So ... My sister and Robbie were never able to have the time together they both so longed for, and deserved. And which, ever since, I've ... ever since I've always felt I prevented. But what sense of hope or satisfaction, could a reader derive from an ending like that? So, in the book, I wanted to give Robbie and Cecilia what they lost out on in life. I'd like to think this isn't weakness or evasion⁽⁹⁾, but a final act of kindness. I gave them their happiness.

Fiona: What's it about?

Tallis: It's complicated.

Scene 3:

At a TV studio- Night

Briony: I had, for a very long time, decided to tell the absolute truth. No rhymes, no embellishments. And I think ... when you've read the book, you'll understand why. I got first-hand accounts of all the events I didn't personally witness, the conditions in prison, the evacuation to Dunkirk, everything. But the effect of all this honesty was rather pitiless⁽⁸⁾. You see, I couldn't any longer imagine what purpose would be served by it.



Vocabulary:

- 1. conscription:** forcing (someone) to serve in the armed forces
- 2. pipe down:** to lower your voice, here means to drop the reins of government
- 3. do a bunk:** to run off in haste
- 4. chum:** informal term for a good friend, especially among boys
- 5. mess about:** fool around carelessly
- 6. jump out of one's skin:** be scared suddenly, unexpectedly
- 7. duck:** to try to avoid
- 8. pitiless:** showing no pity, merciless
- 9. put things right with someone:** be forgiven by someone, to become friends again
- 10. evasion:** action to avoid doing something

(By Zhang Dongya)

Chinglish story

This column focuses on Chinglish mistakes in our daily life. If you have any experiences to share, send them to Gan Tian at gantian@ynet.com.

So mate, do you speak English?

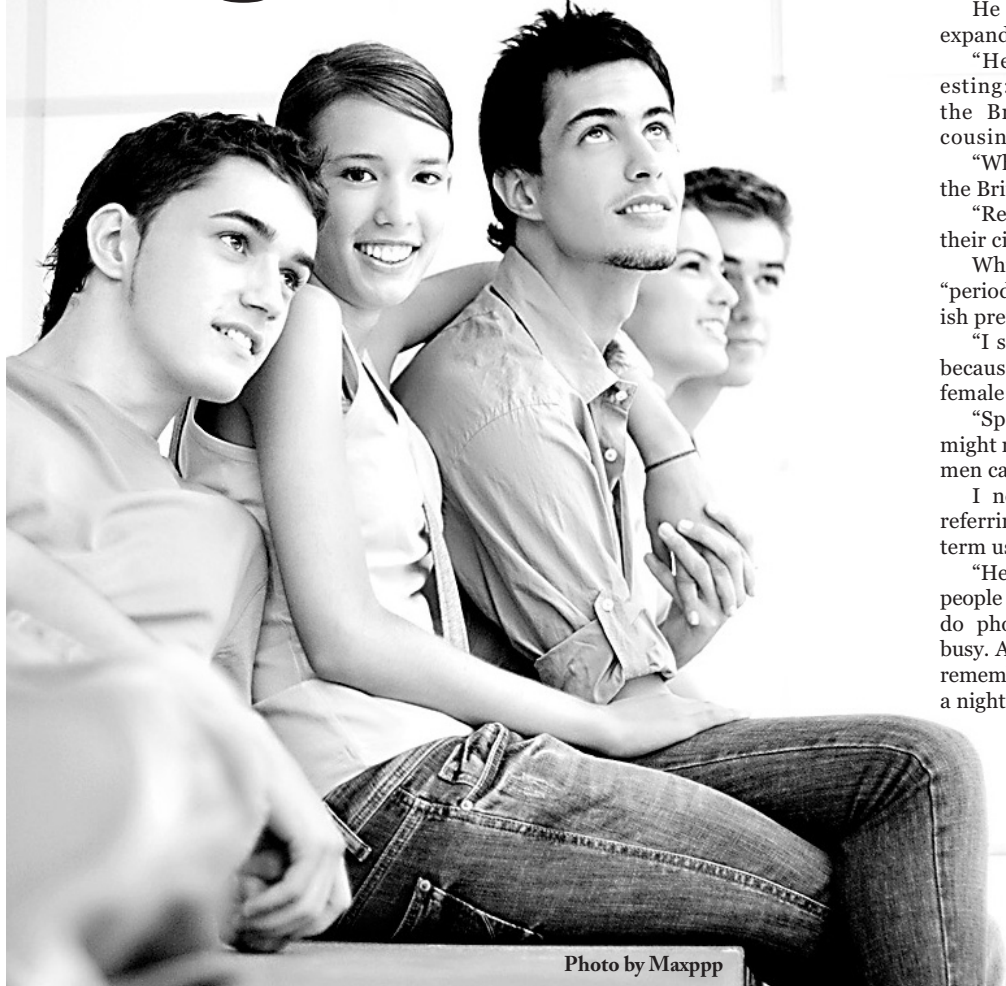


Photo by Maxppp

Blacklist

Beijing Today has come up with Blacklist, a new column of words or phrases commonly misused by Chinese speakers. If you're planning to be an English teacher, reporter or employee of a multinational company, then this page is your new best friend. Watch it for each week.

Local professor: Zhu Shida

1. The otaku obsesses over animation.

According to the Webster dictionary, to obsess is a transitive verb meaning, "to haunt, beset, harass, preoccupy one's self." It is usually used in a passive form. So, one way to express the idea could be, "The otaku is obsessed with

animation," which is the more common way to see this verb used. The above example using the verb in the present form, "obsesses" is OK just not used as often as the passive form, "obsessed."

2. a new path true love.

To express the idea of the destination of a path, a road, or a

way, concrete or abstract, it should always be followed by the word "to." For instance, it is the way to success. It is the road to peace. So, for this sentence, it should be, "a new path to true love."

3. He guides students to express them through body language.

To express is a transitive verb. If you express an action turned back upon the subject and the subject and direct subject are identical, you have to use the reflexive pronoun. In this case, it should be, "He guides students to express themselves through body language."

Native Speaker: Joe Edwards

1. The otaku obsesses over animation.

This sentence is correct even though there are two ways to present the idea. You usually see the word "obsess" used in the passive form such as, "The otaku is obsessed with animation," which basically means this person can think of nothing else but animation. The passive form is also a little kinder to the subject. The

above example sentence means exactly the same thing only in a different form. For example, someone can obsess over their deceased spouse or a favorite rock performer as many teenagers do. I obsessed over The Beatles for years and still do.

2. A new path true love.

If this is your grammatical path on a love quest, it will be a bumpy ride. The above expres-

sion is incorrect and needs one tiny word to make the road to true love run smoothly again. That word is, "to." Stick it in between the words "path" and "love" and let the kissing begin. The phrase now reads, "A new path to true love." Yes, all you need is love and, in this case, the preposition, "to."

3. He guides the students to express them through body

language.

In this example, one cannot remove one's "self" from the grammatical equation or it makes no sense. The action here is being funneled back on the subject so "self," in the plural, must be attached to "them" to make this sentence work. It now reads, "He guides the students to express themselves through body language."

By Annie Wei

My cousin Jiansheng An, 26, has studied in the UK since he was 16 and currently works for a London financial company. He visited Beijing last weekend.

I hung out with him and his friends in Alfa last Saturday night. Most of his chums are Chinese-born. They were very cute but a little arrogant, a common trait found in young expat guys who are new in town. Apart from that, I found that British English was quite difficult to understand and I did not have much fun because I could not get their jokes. I complained to my cousin, "Can you guys speak English?"

He laughed, deciding to help me expand my language knowledge.

"Here's something you'll find interesting: While Americans study math, the Brits tend to study maths," my cousin said.

"While Americans use the word 'butt,' the British say 'bum.'"

"Really? And what do they do with their cigarette bums?" I said, giggling.

While Americans use the word "period," at the end of a sentence, the British prefer "full stop." My cousin replied.

"I said that I think 'full stop' is better because period sounds too much like a female condition." I said.

"Speaking of women, American men might refer to them as 'chicks,' but British men call them 'birds,'" he said.

I never recalled any male Brit ever referring to a female as a "chick," that term usually came from a US male.

"Here's another difference. In the US, people get engaged and in Britain, so do phones. In the US, phones become busy. And here's another important one to remember, especially when you are having a night of fun. In the US, students use erasers but in Britain, students employ rubbers which across the waves means condom," my cousin said, laughing.

I thought I had better get my British terms figured out before traveling to London or I might find myself painted into a very embarrassing corner.

This column aims to identify Chinglish in public areas. If you see any Chinglish signs, please take a picture and send it to gantian@ynet.com together with your name and address.



Photo by Derrick Sobodash

Agreeable tobacco

By Derrick Sobodash

If you browse around the local supermarket and pay attention to the packaging, you might see it is fairly common that company names, and even the product names, are written in *pinyin* rather than English.

Why do they do this? Because the translation sounds stupid. Not because the translator is unskilled, just because what sounds good in Chinese does not sound anywhere near as good in English.

Exhibit A this week is the "Agreeable Feelings Tobacco & Alcohol Shop."

The shop gets bonus points for using alcohol instead of wine, though the store's sign artist amusingly botched. The letter immediately right of the first o. These kinds of corner stores are generally called "Party Stores" in the US.

However, despite my past Chinglish comments that the character *jiu* should not be translated as "wine," it is not always alcohol either. In this case, spirits or liquor would work better. No one is stopping here for a fine Bordeaux: they are stopping here for small flasks of 144-proof Erguotou – pot-of-two-heads to our Chinglish translators – so they can forget how much work sucked.

The real chuckle comes from the translation of *ruyi tiandi* as "Agreeable Feelings." The first part, *ruyi*, means to have something your way. Burger King has trademarked that slogan, so we have to skip it. The next characters, *tiandi*, mean heaven and earth, or the world in general. There is no way to name a store "The world the way you want it" and not have it sound stupid in English.

It would be better to simply write the pinyin and call this store the Ruyi Tiandi Liquor & Smoke Shop. That sounds like the name of a Chinese-operated party store in the US mid-west.

Incidentally, this shop is just behind a large mall on Wangfujing Street. The only place in the city with more English speakers would be Sanlitun on a Friday night.

5 Friday, April 4

Exhibition Exclusive Freedom



Where: Fafa Gallery, 4 Yuyang Lu, Houshayu, Shunyi
When: Daily 10:30 am – 8 pm, until April 30
Admission: Free

Tel: 8430 2587
Big Boy Series

The paintings in the "Big Boy Series" are excellent works not only because of their demonstration of consummate technical skill and perfect employment of color, but even more so for their unity of philosophy and art, and the unified story they tell of a painter's life and thoughts.

Where: Qin Gallery, Enjoy Paradise, Huaweili 1-1E (North of Beijing Curio City), Chaoyang

When: Tue-Sun 9:30 am – 6 pm, until April 21
Admission: Free

Tel: 8779 0461, 8779 0458
GuoWei Solo Exhibition

Focusing on Chairman Mao, Guo Wei has created some new works. Wearing different apparel and at different ages, Chairman Mao looks so vivid, easy to approach and humorous, reminding people of the past Mao years.

Where: Artist Village Gallery, 1 North of Renzhuang, Songzhuang, Tongzhou

When: Daily 8 am – midnight, until April 27
Admission: 20 yuan
Tel: 6959 8343

Movie

Diva
Where: French Culture Center, 1/F, Guangcai International Mansion, 18 Gongti Xi Lu, Chaoyang
When: 5 pm
Admission: 10-20 yuan
Tel: 6553 2627



Upcoming

Concert

China Philharmonic Orchestra 2007-2008 Musical Festival
Who: Conducted by Long Yu
Where: Poly Theater, 14 Dongzhimen Nan Dajie, Chaoyang
When: 7:30 pm, April 6
Admission: 80-880 yuan
Tel: 6501 1854

6 Saturday, April 5

Exhibition Spirit and Apperception – Yan Zhixiong Solo Exhibition

Where: Cloud & Sky Photo Image Gallery, C3006 Brewery Art Complex, Beihuqu Lu, Andingmen Wai Dajie, Chaoyang

When: Tue-Sun 10:30 am – 5:30 pm, until May 2
Admission: Free
Tel: 5202 3892

Wei Qingi Solo exhibition



The exhibition features works which seek to create a new language of expression through traditional media – ink and wash on paper – employing the plasticity of the medium to explore its potential as a vehicle for contemporary ideas.

Where: Red Gate Gallery, Dongbianmen Watchtower, Chongwen

When: Daily 10 am – 5 pm, until May 5
Admission: Free
Tel: 6525 1005

Rao Songqing Solo Exhibition



Rao Songqing's landscapes depict the soft grays of the forest around Beijing in winter. The artist's paintings stem from the oldest and most noble of painting traditions in China: the landscape painting tradition.

Where: Yan Club Arts Center, 2 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang

When: Daily 11 am – 6 pm, until June 4
Admission: Free
Tel: 8457 3506

Movie

Regarde Les Homes Tomber



Where: French Culture Center, 1/F, Guangcai International Mansion, 18 Gongti Xi Lu, Chaoyang

When: 5 pm
Admission: 10-20 yuan
Tel: 6553 2627

7 Sunday, April 6

Tel: 6432 8831 Color Party – Thoma Ryse Solo Exhibition

The art of Thoma Ryse is

Exhibition The Alliance



The Alliance is a temporary gathering under minimum common rules of a certain number of individuals who decide to be together to complete a certain task or to establish common interests.

Where: DoART Gallery, 261 Caochangdi, Changyang
When: Tue-Sun 10 am – 6 pm, until May 4
Admission: Free
Tel: 8457 4550

Crouching Paper, Hidden Dragon

Crouching Paper, Hidden Dragon offers viewers a chance to slow down and take in one of Chinese contemporary art's most neglected art forms: works on paper.

Where: F2 Gallery, 319 Caochangdi, Chaoyang
When: Wed-Sun 10 am – 6 pm, until May 19
Admission: Free



a brazenly welcoming song to color, the joy of living and seeing the world in an abstract light.

Where: Imagine Gallery, 8 Art Studio, Feijiacun Dong Lu, Cuigezhuang, Laiguangying Dong Lu, Chaoyang

When: Tue-Sun 10:30 am – 5:30 pm, until June 6
Admission: Free
Tel: 6438 5747

Metaphorical Signs

Where: Room 4 Beijing Today Art Museum, Building 1, 32 Baiziwang Lu, Chaoyang
When: Daily 10 am – 5 pm, until April 13
Admission: Free
Tel: 5876 9392

Stage in May

Concert

Secret Garden Beijing Concert 2008

Who: Secret Garden
Where: Great Hall of the People, on the west side of Tiananmen Square, Xicheng

When: 7:30pm, May 2
Admission: 180-1,600 yuan

Tel: 51656039

Pinchas Zukerman

Asia Tour Beijing Concert

Who: Pinchas Zukerman
Where: Zhongshan Music Hall, inside Zhongshan Park, Dongcheng

When: 7:30 pm, May 22
Admission: 100-1,280 yuan

Tel: 6559 8306

Ninegates Jazz Festival 2008

Who: Geraldine Laurent

Where: Zhongshan Music Hall, inside Zhongshan Park, Dongcheng

When: 7:30 pm, May 28
Admission: 20-380 yuan

Tel: 6559 8306

Hao Weiya

Special Concert

Who: Hao Weiya
Where: National Grand Theater Music Hall, on the west side of the Great Hall of the People

When: 7:30 pm, May 4
Admission: 50-280 yuan

Tel: 6655 0000

Jay Chou 2008 World

Tour Beijing Concert

Who: Jay Chou
Where: Beijing Workers Gymnasium, Gongti Bei Lu, Chaoyang

When: 7:30 pm, May 1
Admission: 180-1,280 yuan

Tel: 6417 7845

Sound of Angel

Who: Declan Galbraith
Where: Beijing Exhibition Theater, 135 Xizhimen Wai Dajie, Xicheng

When: 7 pm, May 24
Admission: 180-1,280 yuan

Tel: 6835 4455

Opera

Madame Butterfly

Who: Central Conservatory of Music

Where: National Grand Theater Music Hall, on the west side of the Great Hall of the People

When: 7:30 pm, May 8-10
Admission: 80-880 yuan

Tel: 6655 0000

Paguita

Who: Paris Opera Ballet

Where: National Grand Theater Music Hall, on the west side of the Great Hall of the People

When: 7:30 pm, May 16-18
Admission: 280-1,280 yuan

Tel: 6655 0000

(By Li Jing)